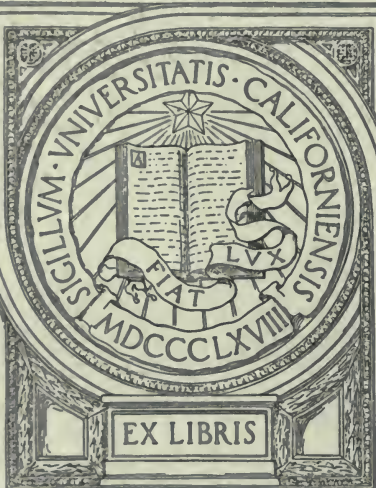




GIFT OF
A. F. Morrison



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at

ATTIC NIGHTS.



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ATTIC NIGHTS

BY

CHARLES MILLS

“ . . . the remembrance of those *Attic nights* and those *refections of the gods*, which we have spent with those admired and respected and beloved companions who have gone before us . . . those happy meetings, when the innocent enjoyment of social mirth expanded into the nobler warmth of social virtue, and the horizon of the board became enlarged into the horizon of man.”—*Curran's Speeches*.



London

CHATTO AND WINDUS, PICCADILLY

1879

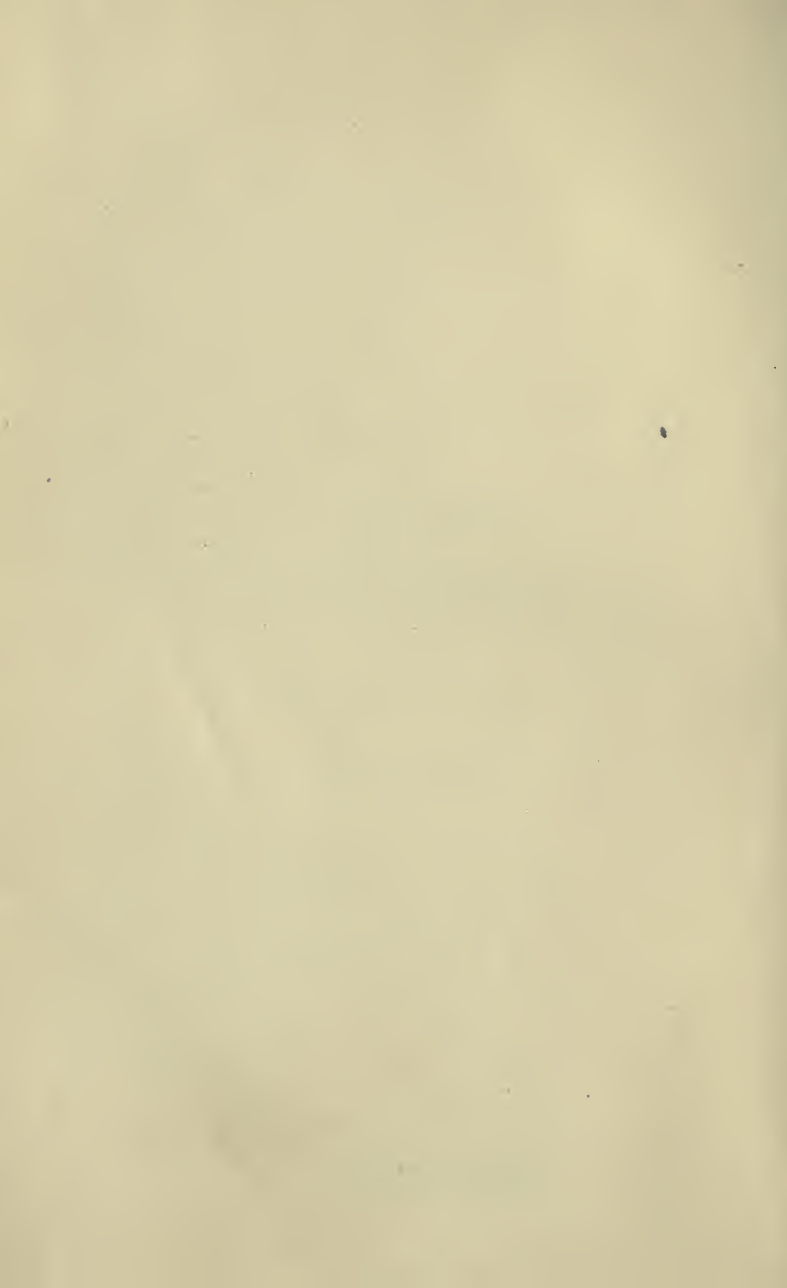
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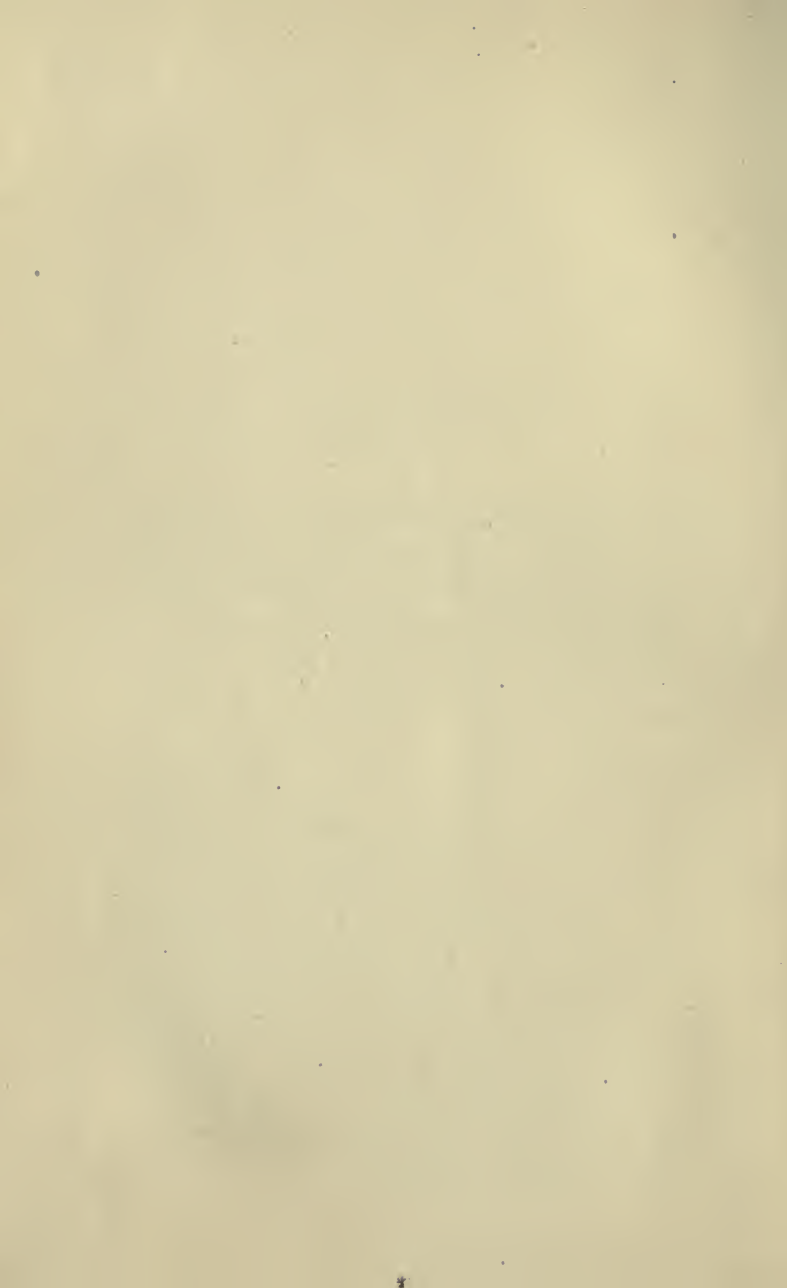
THE AUTHOR
DEDICATES THIS BOOK
TO HIS
OLD SCHOOL-FELLOW AND FRIEND,
HENRY ROBERTS, Esq.

M107806



P R E F A C E.

DISRAELI, in his entertaining *Curiosities of Literature*, relates that Philip of Macedon, in answer to one who prided himself on imitating the notes of the nightingale, replied, "I prefer the nightingale herself." In like manner, those who read these pages will not hesitate to declare their preference for the *Noctes Ambrosianæ*, of which they are but a feeble imitation. Indeed, my severest critic can hardly appreciate more fully than I, the disadvantages under which a writer labours who, whilst aiming at originality as regards the matter, accepts the *rôle* of imitator as respects the form of his work. The fact is, however, that being troubled by what the Shepherd terms the *cacoëthes screebendee*, I was led by my partiality for Professor Wilson's masterpiece, to attempt an imitation of it as a relief to the severer studies of my profession ; and in committing these pages to the press, I desire to disclaim the comparison which they may seem to challenge, and to ask that they may be judged according to their own merits.



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ATTIC NIGHTS.

I.

SCENE I.—*The Fairy's Cleugh.*

Present.—NORTH and the SHEPHERD.

Shepherd. Simmer-time, after a', Mr. North, is the pleasantest season o' the year—gin we except the ither three.

North. Eh, James?

Shepherd. Weel, sir, the fact is that thaigh at this maement simmer seems to me the maist beautifu' o' a' the seasons, my present opinion isna to be depended on, for in wunter I'm aye apt to think nae season comparable to't. And sae wi' spring and autumn.

North. Each alternate season brings with it attractions peculiär to itself, and these become endeared to us by joyous and hallowed associations. Still I must confess that I find most delight in the bright, warm days of summer, and nothing is more congenial to me than to lie down under the shade of a flowery harbour like this, and to give the wing to fancy, allowing it to

soar aloft or to flit about like a bee, making its own sweet music.

Shepherd. Ane micht drae a comparison between the seasons and what I may ca' the foure great classes o' poetry—the yepic, the dramatic, the lyric, and the pastoral—each possessin' as it does, beauties peculiar to itself. Followin' out this idea, I should compare wunter, wi' its invigoratin' but bitin' frosts and wind, to the yepic, which, thagh the manifestation o' th' highest genie, is nevertheless no sae attractive to the majority o' folk as th' inferior manifestations o' poo'r.

North. My memory begins already to throng with passages of peculiar beauty, descriptive of the glories of winter. You remember Thomson's description of—

Shepherd. Just sae, sir; but, as I was gaun to observe, we micht no improperly liken the dramatic school o' poetry to spring, wi' its changefu' weather, its alternations of gloom and sunshine, its restive clouds and sudden showers, which arena unlike the varyin' expressions depickit upo' the faces o' the twa goddesses o' the drawma.

North. Thalia and Melpomene!

Shepherd. And the lyric—how aptly it embodies the beauty o' simmer-time, when a' natur is bricht and festive, and when sorrow itsel' becomes less burdensome frae the divertin' poo'r which beauty gies to the outward world!

North. As Sir Walter sings—

“ In jovial June
How sweet the merry linnet's tune,
How blithe the blackbird's lay !

The wild buck bells from fenny brake,
 The coot dives merry on the lake ;
 The saddest heart might pleasure take
 To see all nature gay."

Shepherd. Then pastoral poetry may no improperly be said to represent autumn——

North. Fruitful of the blessings which a kind Providence has showered upon the world. The seasons, James, all wear familiar faces, and we renew the acquaintance of each with feelings of pleasure, kindled by the remembrance of happy days spent in the old times before.

Shepherd. Mingled, as those feelings at times are, wi' touches o' sadness, as we recall sorrows which have blended wi' our joys.

North. Like sunshine and rain.

Shepherd. Twin children o' ae parent, like the rose and the thorn.

North. Was it not a happy characteristic of the Hellenic mind to endow the beautiful and sublime manifestations of nature with the personality of gods? You remember those fine lines of Wordsworth's ?—

" In that fair clime, the lonely herdsman, stretch'd
 On the soft grass through half a summer's day,
 With music lull'd his indolent repose :
 And in some fit of weariness, if he,
 When his own breath was silent, chanced to hear
 A distant strain, far sweeter than the sounds
 Which his poor skill could make, his fancy fetch'd, 1
 E'en from the blazing chariot of the sun,
 A beardless youth, who touch'd a golden lute,
 And filled the illumined groves with ravishment."

Shepherd. Ye hae a maist excellent memory for Wudsworth's poetry, Mr. North.

North. And for your own too, James.

Shepherd. Weel, I'se no gainsay it. But hasna some recent writer thrown a doubt upon the received explanations o' the origin o' auncient mythology?

North. Yes, James; modern philologists have pursued an entirely new track of inquiry, and appear to have exploded the theories which, until recently, were received with favour, and which regarded the Homeric mythology either as allegorical of philosophy or religion, or as a deification of mortals. According to the latter interpretation, mythology was history interwoven with fable, and the siege of Troy and all the Homeric heroes—Achilles, Agamemnon, Hector—were not the mere creations of a poet's brain. Others have supposed that the *Odyssey* is "the history of the patriarchs, the emigration of Lot from Sodom, and the death of Moses, while the *Iliad* tells the conquest and the destruction of Jericho."*

Shepherd. Ye arena fuilin' me, I howp?

North. Indeed I am not, James, and you will readily believe this when I tell you that Mr. Gladstone is one of the advocates of this Euhemeristic interpretation.

Shepherd. Weel, then, what say the ithers?

North. They contend that mythology is but a disease of language.

Shepherd. Whatt! A sort o' gout in the brain, brought on, nae dout, frae an inordinate indulgence in superstition and siccan unhealthy food.

North. According to Professor Müller, the most eminent living philologist, "most of the Greek, the

* Müller's *Lectures on the Science of Language*, Second Series, pp. 401, 402.

Roman, the Indian, and other heathen gods, are nothing but poetical names, which were gradually allowed to assume a divine personality never contemplated by their inventors. *Eos* was a name of the dawn before she became a goddess, the wife of *Tithonos*, or the dying day.*

Shepherd. And a grand couple they maun hae been, and no unlike each other ; for *Tithonos* should be pictured as resplendent wi' a' those glorious tints which gild the horizon when the sun sinks ahint the distant peak, or the cawm circle o' the watery deeps, blushin' as red as a matador's mantle. Then the twa—lawfully wedded, nae dout, by *Nicht*—become locked i' each ither's arms, and sae remain till old *Sol*, wham I should tak to be their inexorable father, waukens *Eos*, wha rises fresh and rosy frae her couch, as a bride should. But what about the siege o' *Troy* and fair *Helen* ?

North. It becomes "but a repetition of the daily siege of the east by the solar powers, that every evening are robbed of their brightest treasures in the west." *Helen* becomes typical of the dawn, and *Paris* of night, and thus the *Iliad* is but the glorious relation of a myth which had germinated from metaphor.

Shepherd. I hope it isna true, sir.

North. He argues that the modern Aryan dialects are offshoots of a more ancient language, just as the Romance languages were derived from Latin. That ancient language he supposes to have been spoken by a small tribe in Asia, which, in course of time, became divided—the southern branches extending towards

* Müller's *Lectures on the Science of Language*, First Series, p. 11.

India ; the northern to Asia Minor and Europe. The era preceding this dispersion Professor Müller calls the mythopœic period.

Shepherd. But why so? How does he know that that earlier age was mair gien to fashionin' myths than later times?

North. He states that all nouns in ancient languages had a termination expressive of gender, and that this naturally produced in the mind a corresponding idea of sex, so that words like sky and earth, dew and rain, received not only an individual, but a sexual character.

Shepherd. I begin to see the drift o' his argument. But gae on, sir.

North. Thus people began to attach to the conceptions expressed by these and similar words, something of an individual, active, sexual, and, at last, personal character.

Shepherd. And what think you, Mr. North, o' this interpretation?

North. The myths were doubtless the spontaneous product of the fancy and religious aspirations of the early Greeks, although it would appear impossible* to distinguish to what extent they were founded upon historical events. Etymological myths are, according to Grote as well as Müller, found in the Grecian mythology—names, by their analogy to words of real significance, having given "direct occasion to explanatory or illustrative stories."† The muse was to

* "It is impossible," says Professor Draper, "to recall these antique myths without being satisfied that they are, for the most part, truly indigenous, truly of European growth."—*History of Intellectual Development of Europe*, vol. i. p. 42.

† Grote's *History of Greece*, vol. i. p. 474.

the Homeric Greeks what the ancient prophets were to the ancient Jews, the accredited exponents of the future and the past.* In like manner the imagination solved the questions which physical phenomena suggested, by personifying nature, and attributing to these agents the operations of matter.

Shepherd. Then they didna regard these explanations as mere fancies o' the poet?

North. Oh, no! The Nymph, the Dryad, the Olympian gods, were realities to the Greeks. The sun was to them a god, who mounted his chariot in the east, and rested at eve in the west. It was thus that the mythopœic faculty furnished them with a history and a religion in which they believed implicitly, and which connected them with a race of gods and heroes. Nor was this supposed connection without its effect upon the character of the people, for their patriotism was easily fanned into ardour by reference to the exploits of these mythic progenitors — the stories which detailed the devotedness of Menœceus, of Protesilaus, and of Theseus, being as readily accredited as the more recent exploits at Marathon.

Shepherd. But werena some queer tales told o' their gods and goddesses? They didna always act as reason dictated.

North. True, James. Their characters were as diverse as those of mortals, and displayed the like passions and weaknesses which beset humanity.† But

* "The Greeks had no sacred books, properly so-called; and it is probable that the poems of Homer filled, in some particular respects, the place of sacred books for that people."—*Juventus Mundi*, p. 12.

† An argument has been based upon the immorality of the Greek myths, against the theory of the philologists.—See *Social Life in Greece*, p. 324.

poetical justice is usually dealt out to the heroic persons. You will remember that the cruelties inflicted on Tyro were revenged by her sons ; that the impiety of Salmoneus led to his destruction ; and that the arrows of Apollo avenged the insults offered by the Aloidés to the gods. So, too, Scylla, who robbed her father of the purple lock, was cast into the sea ; and Medea was forsaken for Glauke by him whom she had enabled to secure the Golden Fleece.

Shepherd. Weel, whatever may hae been the origin o' mythology, it couldna hae been otherwise than in harmony wi' the Grecian mind, or it wadna hae ta'en sae deep root. And to me it seems a very beautifu' creation. How it maun hae made the bèleiver in it love nature, in every part of which he recognized the manifestations o' a living and active personality ! This pantheism kindled their imagination, and lent, to use your ain beautifu' words—

“ — to the world inaunimate
A pulse and spirit of life.”

North. The polytheism of the early Greeks, James, not only served to refine the mind by leading it into special communion with nature, but originated philosophical speculation. The explanation of natural phenomena by reference to gods and goddesses, though satisfactory to the imagination of an early age, did not convince the reason of Thales and his successors, who discarded the agency of superior beings, and resolved the problem of primordial matter into water, air, the infinite, etc. The supernatural phase of intellectual evolution, to use the language of the Comtists, was succeeded by the

metaphysical. The supernatural agents were set aside, and abstract forces or entities were regarded as the precursors and creators of matter.

Shepherd. Weel, Mr. North, ye'll no despise me for confessin' that the mythological age is far mair attractive to me than the philosophical. The imagination has charms of which reason cannot boast, and I wad rather be the humble shepherd wham Wudsworth has described, and to whose mind a' nature was but the image of divine persons, than Plawto or Aristotle, wi' their entities and abstractions. Those wha, like you and me and the pedlar, have breathed the pure atmosphere o' the hills, and looked wi' rapture upon the variegated hues and changfu' lights o' the forest, know how sic communion melts the heart intil tenderness, and fills it wi' holy rapture.

North. Yes, it does indeed make tender the conscience and the heart, and oft recalls to us those who are now

“Wrapt in eternal silence, far from enemies.”

Look, James, at that lark—how it rises higher and higher towards its watch-tower in the sky.

Shepherd. It's no sae easy to find it again after haein' ance let it quit the sight. But if I canna see't, I can hear its sweet notes drappin' melody. And aiblins some fairies are dancin', no far frae us, to the music, and are gaun thrae a' the figures o' a quadrille, frae the hauns across and set to pairtners to the leddies'-chain and gallopade, or whirlin' roun' in the ecstasy o' a waltz; or maybe there's a trim and winsome little creatur wha has tripped into a circle formed by the ithers, to daunce a kind o' ballet by hersel'.

And, oh, Mr. North! I canna but think she maun be uncommon prood o' the bonny bodice that shows aff to perfection her taper waist, as weel's o' the variegated skirt made o' a sma' flower-leaf, which disna reach muckle lower than her knees. And nae dout that bricht necklace which ye see glitterin' upon her is naethin' mair than a gossamer webb studded wi' draps o' dew. And noo she has gien the last spring, and has alighted upon a daisy, and curtsies with the pleased air o' a coquette, whilst some twa or thrae ardent admirers are fannin' her heated cheeks wi' ants' wings, and offering her refreshment in the shape o' hinny stown frae a neighbouring hive.

North. Nor is it, James, an unsuitable trysting-place for fairies, who, according to Shakespeare, meet

“ On hill, in dale, forest or mead,
By paved fountain, or by rushy brook,
Or on the beached margent of the sea,
To dance their ringlets to the whistling wind.”

Shepherd. Is't no verra delightfu' to be able to abandon ane's sel' to sic-like fancies? And yet hoo mony are there wha wadna hesitate to ca' them, if no sinfu', at least idle!

North. Want of imagination or of poetical sensibility is a great defect in the character either of man or woman. How different the world would be if shorn of flowers, which have been beautifully called the poetry of God's nature! And yet those of either sex who are devoid of poetical sensibility are like a world divested of beauty.

SCENE II.—*The Tent. Time—Nine o'clock.*

NORTH, TICKLER, *and the* SHEPHERD. (AMBROSE
and SIR DAVID *in attendance.*)

Shepherd. What for are ye glancin' furtively towards the door, Mr. North? Is it that ye are expectin' Awmrose? Oh, sir! but thaigh ye're fond o' feelosophy and poetry, you have an intuitive and prophetic consciousness o' the advent o' sooper.

Tickler. Nor are these traits opposed to each other.

North. My love of punctuality is insuperable even in the trivialities of life.

Shepherd. Noo that's just affectation. Ca' ye sooper ane o' the trivialities o' life! Ye micht as weel say that breathin' maun be classed amang them, for eatin' and breathin' are equally essential. Surely you arena beginnin' to affeck—for it's naethin' but affectation—no to interest yoursel' in what you eat or drink? Gin that be your intention, I shall set ye doon amang the mediocrities, wha are aye fearsome o' compromisin' their dignity by an acknowledgment of temporal blessings. But if your anxiety ainly proceeded frae loe o' punctuality it was surely commendable, for I canna brook a breach of it mysel', especially whan ane's health is sae dependent upon its observance. What can be mair irritatin' than to find whan ane comes hame to dinner that instead o' its being ready, the potatoes are ainly beginnin' to simmer, or the meat isna aboon half cyuckit? But what time did ye fix for sooper? Maybe Awmrose isna at faut,

thaigh were I to judge frac ma appetee I should agree wi' you i' thinkin' him no sae punctual as usual.

North. Nine was the hour fixed.

Shepherd. And eisters dinna need cyuckin', sae I wuss ye'd pu' the bell.

Tickler. I hear Ambrose's step upon the landing, and surely that's Sir David's voice ?

Shepherd. There's nae mista'en it, for nae vice is softer or mair expressive in its modulations.

[*Timepiece strikes nine, and enter AMBROSE and SIR DAVID GAM, with the Council of Five Hundred.*]

Shepherd. The usual complement, Awmrose ?

Ambrose. Certainly, Mr. Hogg.

Shepherd. Hoo sappy they luk ! Let no time be lost, sae pu' your chairs to.

[*They surround the board.*]

North (after a pause in the conversation.) No doubt, these oysters were resting snugly and complacently in their salty home, not many hours ago.

Shepherd. Unconscious a' the while o' their destiny, which, after a', isna sae bad as it micht hae been, for it maun be consolin' to them to know that their bonny briests arena exposed to the unadmirin' gaze o' sumphs.

Tickler. I fear, James, such consolation will alleviate them as little as it would us.

North. Ah ! how rarely do we console ourselves in misfortune by the reflection that our sufferings might be greater.

Shepherd. And hoo muckle the creatur o' circumstance is man ! What a change does indigestion

produce, e'en in the best o' us, convertin', for the while, the maist equable o' tempers intil downricht snap-pishness, whilst good digestion fosters a kind and benevolent disposition! This reflection, too, might afford philosophical consolation to eisters, for they rarely fa' oot wi' e'en the tenderest o' stomachs.

Tickler. We can say of them what Shakespeare says of Cleopatra—

“They make hungry where most they satisfy.”

North. Milton, with his usual insight, describes Adam as blessed with good digestion. You remember his description of our first parent, in which he says—

“— his sleep
Was aery-light, from pure digestion bred.”

Shepherd. And dinna ye think, sir, that Howmer maun hae enjoyed his meals as weel's the shepherd?

North. Why so?

Shepherd. Because he is always sae guid tempered.

Tickler. Horace, on the same principle, dubbed him a thirsty soul.

North. If one may judge of an author's temperament by his writings, the *Iliad* is conclusive as to Homer's healthiness, for all his heroes are made keenly sensitive to pain.

Tickler. That appears, however, to have been characteristic of the ancient Greeks.*

North. Dr. Johnson, in a conversation with the Bishop of St. Asaph, expressed his opinion that an author's works indicate a wished-for, rather than a realized, state of mind.

* Rev. J. P. Mahaffy's *Social Life in Greece*, p. 25.

Shepherd. Awmrose, rax ower the yill. (*He takes a long draught.*) What a delicious sharpness! It surely is Bass', for nae ither liquor brewed frae mawt possesses the same flavour and is sae sparklin'. Amna I richt, Awmrose?

Ambrose. As usual, sir.

Shepherd. I thocht I couldna be mista'en. Our freens the teetotalers shall drink ma share o' water, gin they'll alloo me theirs o' mawt. I dinna ken what effeck yill has on ye twa; but it seems to wrap my sowl in delightfu' reverie, and to lend wings to fancy, sae that it soars far aboon this sublunary sphere into the regions o' blue immensity.

Tickler. And your memory, James?

Shepherd. Weel, it sometimes, thaigh no aften, plays me fawse; but usually the drink stirs it into activity, and brings vividly before my mind passage after passage o' poetry and prose which hae lang slumbered in the chambers o' ma memory.

North. Teetotalism proceeds upon a false assumption.

Shepherd. Wha douts it?

North. It assumes that total abstinence is equally conducive to enjoyment and health as the moderate use of alcohol. Now, I agree with Dr. Johnson that wine gives great pleasure, and that every pleasure is of itself a good, and I do not think the blessings of life are so numerous that we can afford to sacrifice any of them with impunity.

Tickler. As Philip van Artevelde asks—

“Am I in life's embellishments so rich,
In pleasures so redundant, as to wish
The cheapest one away?”

North. Of course, alcohol, like most things, is capable of abuse ; but this is no argument against its use. An ordinate cultivation of what are called the egoistic propensities of human nature, for instance, is favourable to the benevolent affections, whilst an undue gratification of them has a contrary effect. And so with alcohol.

Shepherd. It is unreasonable to argue frae this possibility o' abuse that its use is unlawful, for itherwise mony o' the principles that guide men's conduct—their desire for praise and honour, for instance, which serves to make them emulate the good and the great must be pronounced vicious. But were these stimulants to exertion denied to man, what wad be left to urge him

“To scorn delichts and live laborious days?”

Tickler. Temperance consists, not in the refusal of stimulants, but in the reasonable use of them.

“We curse not wine : the vile excess we blame.”

North. And yet are we not wasting idle words upon this subject? Have we urged anything new, or about which men are likely to differ? Is the dread of intemperance the only reason why many eschew alcohol? Let us not deceive ourselves into thinking that because we can observe the bounds which separate temperance from excess, we are therefore placed upon a higher pedestal than, and are entitled to decry, the advocates of total abstention, many of whom, I verily believe, deny themselves the gratification arising from a rational use of stimulants, not from any fear of indulgence degenerating into excess, but to induce others, less fortunate in this respect, to imitate their

example. All honour to the men who, remembering the Apostle's words, "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves," observe the precept in their lives.

Shepherd. Say no anither word, sir, for I feel the tears wellin' up intil ma een. And noo, Mr. Tickler, I'm ready to listen to any remarks you may think proper to make, providin' the subjeck isna feelosophy, for o' that we've had aneuch the nicht.

Tickler. What say you, then, to poetry ?

Shepherd. Naethin' better, though ye maunna expeck me to interrapp you gin ye talk havers that wad provoke Urawnia hersel'.

North (winking at Tickler). By-the-by, Tickler, don't you think that much of the praise lavished upon Milton is really undeserved, and that much of his epic is of doubtful merit ?

Tickler. No question of it.

North. It has always struck me that the medley of big words to be met with in the eleventh book of *Paradise Lost* was introduced simply to parade his learning.*

Tickler. His language is indeed

"A piebald speech, half native and half Greek."

[*The SHEPHERD shows signs of uneasiness.*

North. Take the opening passage of the sixth book as a fair specimen of the poem, and see what are its merits :—

* As the Shepherd fails to answer this objection, we may quote the following words of Professor Plumptre : "Milton, like Æschylos, delighted in the rhythmic grandeur of semi-barbaric names, each with its associations of mystery and wonder."—*Trans. of Æschylos*, Introd. p. 30.

“All night the dreadless angel, unpursued,
Through Heaven's wide champain held his way ; till Morn,
Wak'd by the circling Hours, with rosy hand
Unbarr'd the gates of light.”

The first line may pass without remark, as it does not pretend to poetical excellence. But what shall we say of the second? Champaign is surely as unsuitable a word as could have been chosen, and sounds unmusical. Milton ought to have guarded against Gallicisms, and especially against one so ill adapted to his verse.

[*The SHEPHERD becomes still more restless.*

But to proceed. Morn may, not improperly, be supposed to have been waked by the circling hours ; but how her hand could have become rosy ere the gates of light were opened, or why she should be the one to open them, I cannot tell, as morn and light are here synonymous terms. Had the circling hours been made to unbar the gates, as well as wake the morn, I should have had no objection, providing the actions had been performed simultaneously.

Tickler. Is not the passage borrowed from the *Faerie Queen*? If I remember aright, Spenser speaks of

“—the golden Oriental gate
Of greatest heaven.”

North. No, Tickler. When Milton plagiarized, Homer—as in this instance—was usually the victim. No doubt, the lines of which we are speaking were suggested by a passage which occurs in the eighth book of the *Iliad*, and which the Earl of Derby thus renders—

“Forthwith the gates of Heav'n their portals wide
Spontaneous open'd, guarded by the Hours.”

Shepherd (starting up). Is this what ye ca' creetishism? Is it thus ye find faut wi' what ye canna understaun'? Talk o' Gallicisms, whan the word to which ye tak exception had been used no ainly ance or twice, but aften, by the best authors.

Tickler. I doubt it, James.

Shepherd. Weel, Mr. Tickler, I amna ower muckle surprised that ye should do that, thaigh ane wha quotes frae the *Faerie Queen* ought surely to know that Diana is there spoken of as forsakin'

“ All those fair forests about Arlo hid ;
And all that mountain which doth overlook
The richest *champaign* that may else be hid.”

And pray doesna Shakespeare himsel', speaking o' women in *Lucrece*, say—

“ Their smoothness, like a goodly *champaign* plain,
Lays open all the little worms that creep ?”

Maybe, too, you never heard o' a writer ca'd Margaret Duchess o' Newcastle, or of her poem, in which Melancholy says o' hersel' ?—

“ I walk in meadows, where grows fresh green grass ;
In fields, where corn is high, I often pass ;
Walk up the hills, where round I prospects see,—
Some bushy woods, and some all *champaigns* be.”

But, pray, what ither word wad sae weel describe the vast regions which divided that pairt o' heaven where Satan and his legions were in revolt again' God, frae the sacred hill on which stood the supreme seat? Tauk o' the inconsistency o' morn unbarrin' the gates o' licht! why, wha should unbar them if no the morn? Hasna, indeed, Spenser himsel' committed what you pronounce a blunder?

Tickler. I think not.

Shepherd. But I say he has, and you'll find the passage in the eleventh canto o' the *Legend o' Sir Guyon*.

North. Perhaps you remember it, James ?

Shepherd. Sae I do, and it runs thus—

“ Early, before the Morn with crimson ray
The windows of bright heaven open'd had,
Through which into the world the dawning Day
Might look, that maketh every creature glad,
Up rose Sir Guyon in bright armour clad.”

But, aiblins, had ye written the poem, ye wad hae set nicht to do the business, and sae they'd hae remained unbarred the noo. Had ye ever observed—for ye maun aften hae seen—the red sun shoot up ower some distant hill, lang after the horizon has been fringed wi' golden waves o' licht, and irrawdiate wi' orient pearl the bonny meadows, ye wad hae understood no ainly the propriety, but the appropriateness o' Milton's language, and felt hoo keen was his appreciation o' beauty, and hoo grandly his genie could paint nature's glories. The hail passage is fu' o' beauty ; and as to its being a plagiarism frae the *Faerie Queen*, why, the notion is just absurd. Because, forsooth, the word *gate* occurs i' baith passages, the ane maun o' necessity be ta'en frae the ither ! Gin this be true, then no ainly Milton, but Shakespeare and Drayton, and Keats and Scott, were plagiarists, for all of them hae used the same word i' describing the advent o' the morn.

North. Are you quite sure, James ?

Shepherd. Am I sure ? Deny, if ye can, that Oberon says he

“ —the groves may tread,
Even till the eastern *gate*, all fiery-red,

Opening on Neptune with fair blessed beams,
Turns into yellow gold his salt-green streams."

Or that Drayton wrote this passage—

"Then from her burnish'd *gate* the goodly glitt'ring east
Gilds every lofty top, which late the humorous night
Bespangled had with pearl, to please the morning's sight."

Or that this is frae *Endymion*—

"For I would watch all night to see unfold
Heaven's *gates*, and Æthon snort his morning gold
Wide o'er the swelling streams."

Or that Sir Walter wrote the lines—

"Soon as the day flings wide his *gates*,
The king shall know what suitor waits."

Nay, haena you yoursel' used the verra same expression in *The Scholar's Funeral*?

North. Eh?

Tickler. Hum!

Shepherd. Ye needna affeckit surprae, for I can repeat the lines, ill as they merit bein' remembered—

"And those pure youthful voices, where are they,
That, hymning far up in the listening sky,
Seemed issuing softly through the *gates* of day,
As if a troop of sainted souls on high
Were hovering o'er the earth with angel melody?"

If this be what ye ca' creetishism, I'se bid ye baith gude nicht, for human patience isna equal to sic twaddle.*

* The following instances may be cited in addition to those adduced by the Shepherd:—

"Il di seguente, allor che aperte sono
Del lucido oriente al sol le porte."

Gerusalemme Liberata.

North (*affecting indignation*). Twaddle, Mr. Hogg! twaddle!

Shepherd. Yes, t-w-a-d-d-l-e — twaddle! which you ought to be ashamed to hae uttered. What can ye expeck folk to say about *The Isle of Palms*, gin ye speak sae disparagin'ly, no to say foolishly, o' Milton's yepic? There isna, i' a' your poems, a single passage fit to be compared to th' anc ye've been censurin'; nay, I venture to say that ye canna find ane till match it i' Wudsworth or ony ither modern poet.

North. Tut, tut, James!

Shepherd. In which, then?

North. In the *Queen's Wake*.

Shepherd (*beamingly*). Oh, sir! But I see hoo it is. Ye've anly been at your owld tricks, and didna mean what ye said. Is't no sae?

North. Pardon, my dear shepherd, the innocent deceit we have practised so successfully.

Shepherd. Shak hauns, baith o' ye, for I'm afeared I may hae said what I wadna repeat. Sae let's drink to our reconciliation in the manner o' th' auncient Greeks.

[*The toast is duly honoured.*

And pray alloo me to ask why ye did it?

North. The fact is, we wished to enjoy the sight of your honest indignation, knowing how easily it might be appeased.

“Non lunge all' auree porte ond esce il Sole.”

Ibid.

“Upon the green the virgins wait,
In rosy chaplets gay,
Till Morn unbar her golden gate,
And give the promised May.”

John Cunningham's *Kate of Aberdeen*.

Shepherd. Was that it, Tickler ?

Tickler. Yes, James ; we wished to amuse ourselves by a display of the dramatic element in your character.

Shepherd. But I wasna acting, and ye surely canna mean to affirm that the real sufferings o' mankind are pleasant to witness ?

North. Why, James, they give rise to a self-satisfaction which cannot be other than pleasurable. You remember that this is finely noticed by Lucretius in the opening lines of the second book.

Tickler. Were it otherwise we should shun that which gives rise to sympathy, which we do not.

Shepherd. Then, according to this theory o' yours——

Tickler. It is not only ours, but that of Burke and many other philosophers.

Shepherd. Weel, whoever shares it, it is this, if I understaun ye : that because sympathy can ainly arise in connection wi' the misfortunes o' ithers, and because there is a certain pleasure in't, therefore——

North. Exactly.

Shepherd. Wha's vice is that ?

North. What ! have you so soon forgotten the old tone ?

Shepherd. Dinna put on siccan an injured luk, for it did sound unco strange at the maement. But to Burke's—if it be his, as ye say—solution o' this question I dissent a'thegither ; for, thaigh I dinna doubt the fack o' our derivin' certain pleasurable emotions frae the manifestation o' sympathy, I canna attribute such sensations to the cause you mention. I should rather trace its origin to the comparison

which we institute between the relative positions of ourselves and those whom we sympathize with. And is not this borne out by the fact that the emotions caused forth by sympathy are entirely those of pleasure, but are mingled—and oftentimes most touchingly and affectingly—with those of pain?

North. Most true, my dear Shepherd.

Shepherd. Is it not, therefore, most philosophical, because most truthful, to attribute the pain so experienced to the sorrow that arises from the contemplation of human misfortunes, and to assign the pleasure incident to sympathy to the favourable comparison so instituted?

North. Whence, then, arises the pleasure derived from the representation of tragedy? It is undoubtedly true that, as Burke says, the nearer it approaches the reality, the more perfect is its power.

Shepherd. Well, sir, I think that remark just perfects my theory; for however natural tragical representations may be, they can never so far deceive us as to make us regard them as other than imitations; and this consciousness of their unreality destroys, or rather modifies, that part of sympathy which is painful, and increases the pleasure derived from the comparison which we draw. But what other theories are there about the subject? Do you remember any, Mr. North?

North. There is that of Schlegel, who exhibits the fault of German philosophers in looking for superior and uncommon causes. He, like Burke, denies that tragedy is indebted to the comparison of which you have spoken, and ascribes its effects either to the dignity of human nature, or to the trace of a higher

order of things impressed on the apparently irregular course of events, and mysteriously revealed in them.

Shepherd. Weel, a' that I can say is, that I have never, consciously, been indebted to my appreciation o' the dignity o' human natur' for the enjoyment which I hae often derived frae the drawma.

North. Nor can I trace the operation of any such thought in my own mind; but I think we do derive a part of the satisfaction of which we are speaking from our sense of the retributive justice awarded to the guilty. And this appears to be borne out by the feeling of dissatisfaction and disappointment which we experience from witnessing a play in which the guilty escape punishment.

Tickler. Guizot,* if I remember right, attributes the pleasure derivable from the representation of tragedy to the exercise of our faculties; and, so far from agreeing with those who hold the idea of reality to be essential to the pleasure arising from its representation, he is of opinion that such an idea would actually convert the pleasure into an entirely different feeling.

Shepherd. Gin he means to assert that the apparent reality o' the play has naethin' to do wi' its effect, he is wrang, like the rest o' them. Were this true, *Hawmlet* and *Macbeth* wad be mair effective in the study than upon the stage. But this isna the fack. Tak away the impression o' the reality and what remains?

Tickler. You are right, James; for, as Horace says—

“A thing when heard, remember, strikes less keen
On the spectator's mind than when 'tis seen.”

* *Corneille and his Times*, pp. 208, 209.

North. There is much truth in James's view ; and, indeed, I have a dim recollection of passages in Burke's *Essay*, in which he attributes the pleasure derivable from the representation of tragedy to the fact that we know it is but fiction after all, and to the consciousness of our own freedom from the evils so represented.*

Tickler. But the plots and incidents of tragedy are often derived from actual events.

North. Granted ; but it is only when the events have occurred at a time sufficiently distant to enable us to view them with something akin to indifference—to regard them, that is, as historical, rather than in the light of personal experiences—that they become fit subjects for the dramatist. This view is supported by the fact that when Phrynichos made the capture of Miletos by the Persians the subject of a play, he was fined a thousand drachmæ. The occurrence was of too recent a date to allow of its representation upon the stage being witnessed with other than painful feelings.† Or, as Tickell expresses it—

“ Slow comes the verse that real woe inspires ;
Grief unaffected suits but ill with art,
Or flowing numbers with a bleeding heart.”

* Burke's *Works*, vol. i. p. 79. The views attributed in the text to Burke are not his own, however, but those alleged by him to be commonly held.

† “ The terrible and pathetic in real life are painful things to witness ; but in the mimic representation the worst part is taken away by the consciousness that it is unreal, at the same time that it is sufficiently lifelike to produce an impression somewhat similar to that which would be called forth by reality. The feeling thus made faint becomes pleasurable, just as warmth is enjoyment, though heat be intolerable.”—*Life and Letters of the Rev. F. W. Robertson*,” p. 205.

Tickler. It is useless to attempt to solve these philosophical problems ;¹ for I believe with Lewis that philosophy is powerless for this purpose, and that, as Dante says—

“ ——— là onde vegna lo 'ntelletto
Delle prime notizie, uomo non sape.”

Shepherd. That's an unsatisfactory way of dispensin' wi' feelosophy, Tickler, a'thaigh I shallna quarrel wi' you for shelvin' it for the present. But what are we to discuss the noo? Gin feelosophy, wi' a' its alluring perplexities and associations—an' is it no intimately associated with the memory o' men the verra soun' o' whose names is pleasant to the ear?—is to be denied to us, where shall we turn for a subjeck? Shall we deal wi' questions o' leeterary history, sic as the plurality o' Howmer, the authenticity o' the Paston Letters, or the awthorship o' Junius; or shall we discuss the relative merits o' warriors and statesmen and poets, or of our periodical leeterature? Or shall we plunge intil wider and, maybe, mair congenial subjecks—those o' manners, leeterature, and life? Oh, sirs! but whan ane gies e'en but a casual glance o'er the wide realms o' inquiry which are open to man, he canna help feelin' hoo muckle honour God has conferred on him by endowin' him with an intellect sae capacious, sae powerfu', and sae discriminatin'. The mere enumeration o' the sciences and their manifold teachings affords a glorious list o' victories achieved by human intellect, while it p'intis out the deserts still requiring cultivation. Astronomy, geology, philosophy, chemistry, hoo vast their range! hoo shublime their truths o' the mysteries o' heaven and

earth, and mind and matter ! And if human capacity and human achievements are sae wonderfu', hoo shall we regard Him wha made us, and frae whom nae secrets are hid ! Oh, sirs ! but micht we no inaptly compare the world to a vast cathedral created for His worship, but which, alas ! is too aften desecrated by avowed unbelief, unbrotherly love, idle complaints, and petty jealousies ? What a sublime Hallelujah wad burst frae the lips o' a regenerate and God-loving warld, gin the minds which He has blessed wi' wisdom, the hairts He has made light wi' happiness, the souls He has tempered and purified by sorrow and tribulation, were to feel the debt o' love they owe to Him frae whom a' blessings flow,—the Lord and Creator of a' !

Tickler. God bless you, James !

North. Next to our reverence for God, is our reverence for those great ones of the past, whose writings we vainly strive to imitate. Could we but see them move before us in silent procession, how we should strain our eyes to mark each feature and expression ! How we should strive to touch the mantle of the blind old bard of Chios' Isle ; to note the features of the ancient satirist ; to gain a smile from the sweet countenance of Virgil ; to observe the bearing of Plato and Aristotle and Lucretius, trembling meanwhile with the reverence which their genius has kindled in our souls, and loving them with the filial tenderness of sons in whose hearts bloom the flowers of poetry and philosophy which we have transplanted from those gardens of thought which they cultivated and enriched. And as the goodly troop marched majestically past, should we not exclaim, with recognizing voice—

“Quegli è Omero poeto sovrano :
L'altro è Orazio satoio, che viene,
Ovido è 'l terzo, e l'ultimo è Lucano;”

and so on, until the whole procession had vanished into the spirit-world ?

“What gives the past the haunting charms that please
Sage, scholar, bard ?—The shades of men like these !”

Tickler. Are we not too apt to fall into the error indicated by Bacon,* of allowing our admiration of antiquity to deter us from advancement ?

Shepherd. Why, Tickler, there's none wha admires them mair than yoursel'.

North. No doubt, some who have been familiar with Grecian and Roman literature have felt hopeless of rivalling it, and have thus been deterred from authorship. But these are, I should judge, exceptional cases, for excellence oftener begets rivalry than depresses effort. On the whole, the influence of classical writers has been beneficial. Milton, for example, would scarcely have written so well, had he not refined his taste and attuned his ear by the study of ancient literature.

Shepherd. Weel, sir, ye may be right. What is Tickler's opinion ?

Tickler. A knowledge of the ancient classics undoubtedly elevates the taste and sharpens the critical faculty, though, as I believe, at the expense of the creative powers ; for I agree with Schlegel † that Camoens and Tasso, for instance, would have developed themselves with more power, liberty, and beauty, if they had been free from Virgilian shackles, which

* In the *Novum Organum*. † *History of Literature*, Lect. 11.

cramped their genius and led them astray. There can, however, be no doubt that many have owed their taste for literature to Homer, and Virgil, and——

Shepherd. Dinna mak odious selections, but include a' th' auncient writers.

North. Nor can it be denied that the nearer we approach to perfection in letters, as in everything else, the higher will be the standard of excellence.

Tickler. But may not that be favourable to the few, and depressing to the many?

North. Were it possible that this standard could be too high, we should be driven to admit that general mediocrity is preferable to isolated excellence.

Shepherd. Which nane o' us wad be prepared to concede.

North. No, James ; for we, like Longinus,* should prefer an imperfect sublime to a perfect mediocrity. But I might cite, in answer to Tickler's question, the fact that the revival of classical learning in England and Italy in the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries had not the effect of discouraging, but of stimulating, native genius.

Tickler. Very true ; whilst the prevalence of a false standard of literary merit during the Middle Ages exercised a depressing influence.

Shepherd. I suppose verra little poetry was written in those days, Tickler ?

Tickler. Not much ; and this deficiency is somewhat surprising, for it seems natural to expect that poetry would, even in the darkest ages, have occasionally burst into passionate utterance. Probably this deficiency may partially be accounted for by the

**Essay on the Sublime*, ch. 27.

revolution in language, which was then changing Latin into French, Italian, and Spanish. During this transition, language was too mutable for the expression of those shades of sentiment in which poetry so largely consists.

Shepherd. The history o' literatüre is a noble subject for study and contemplation.

North. It is indeed, and it is as interesting as it is instructive. What an insight it affords into the relative degrees of civilization attained by different nations! How have learning and material prosperity gone hand-in-hand together! * What pictures it sets before us for admiration! The flickering rays of light streaming through the bars of Boethius's prison, as he experienced as well as described the *Consolations of Philosophy*; the succeeding darkness; and the transformation of the language of Cicero and Virgil into the Romance dialects. What more pleasing than to listen to the amatory and warlike songs of the troubadours and *trouvères*, manifesting, as they did, the dawn of better days; to think how loves like those of Abelard and Eloise were chanted north and south of the Loire; to note how the Provençals were succeeded by the minnesingers and their erotic lays! Then came the revival of that taste for antiquity which kindled the fire of Dante's genius, and made him sing of hell and purgatory and heaven, in strains which invested his beloved Beatrice with the brightness of heavenly wisdom. Then the voice of Petrarch broke upon the world, which listened with delight to sonnets that

* Mr. Buckle has ably indicated the intimate connection that exists between the acquisition of wealth and the progress of knowledge. See *Hist. of Civilization*, ch. 2.

have made Laura and wild Vaucuse immortal. Then came the interweaving shades of light and darkness, and later we find fancy giving place to reason. But the light had dawned, and flicker as it might, it could never again become darkness visible; for the spirit of human knowledge is insatiate of goodness and of progress, and its advance has been so rapid, and its strides have become so vast, that all nations will ere long have felt the impress of her humanizing genius—a genius the aspirations of which are far higher than the material prosperity of man, and whose influences are beneficent as truth.

Shepherd. Weel, sir, but ye hae set me a' on a glow, and amaist made me forget to ask whether the subjeck isna too vast for the discursive tauk of a treeo wha ainly pretend to sip frae the owerflowin' cup o' human knowledge. But is it no a sublime destiny to be counted one of those

“Sages of ancient times, as gods revered :
As gods beneficent, who blessed mankind
With arts, with arms, and humanized a world?”

Tickler. And how thankful we should be, Jamie, that we can exclaim, with truth—

“Knowledge hath left the hermit's ruined cell,
The narrow convent, and the cloister's gloom,
With world-embracing wings to soar and dwell
'Mid purer ether, and sublimer room.”

Shepherd. Speaking of the history of literature, hae you seen the *History of English Literature*, written by a Frenchman, and translated by one o' the masters o' our Academy?

North. You refer, I suppose, to M. Taine's history ?

Shepherd. I believe that's the name. Is the book a good one ?

North. The perusal of it, whilst it has impressed me, as it must every one, with a high opinion of the author's intimate acquaintance with our literature, and of his genius and eloquence, has convinced me of the truth of the elder Disraeli's opinion as to the incapacity of one nation to judge correctly of the literature of another. M. Taine has fallen into the error of attempting to reduce "the strong contrasts of national tastes to one common standard, by forcing such dissimilar objects into comparative parallels," and of trying them by conventional principles and arbitrary regulations—and has thus been led to condemn what, in truth, his mind is inadequate to comprehend, or the experience of his associations to combine. Whilst admitting that the French are the least poetical in Europe, he yet leaves upon our mind the impression that he prefers Racine to Shakespeare. Although he admits Pope's marvellous art of expressing his ideas, he judges the ideas themselves to be mediocre, and does not hesitate to say that the classical dress is only fitted for Frenchmen. Speaking of Dryden, he says that his "pamphleteering aptitude, practical and English, confines him to the low region of every-day and personal combats, far from the lofty philosophy and speculative freedom which gave endurance and greatness to the classical style of his French contemporaries ;" and in the same sentence in which he praises *Alexander's Feast* as a masterpiece of rapture and of art, he asserts that Victor Hugo has equalled it. As

to Lamb, Coleridge, Campbell, and Southey, he credits them with having possessed talent, but denies them genius.

Shepherd. And pray how does he speak o' your ain great favourite, Wudsworth?

North. Not much more favourably than of the others, James; for he thinks it possible he might love his poetry when he has emptied his head of all worldly thoughts, and looked up at the clouds for ten years to refine his soul. He admits, however, that the metal is genuinely noble, and that, besides several very beautiful sonnets, there is now and then a work—amongst others, *The Excursion*—in which we forget the poverty of the scenery to admire the purity and elevation of the thought.

Tickler. What does he think of our philosophers, historians, and novelists?

North. The English, in philosophy, he says, follow experience; the Germans, abstraction; whilst the business of the French is to combine these two types of mind, and thus to produce from them the universal mind. With respect to our historians, he thinks it sufficient praise to say of Hume, Robertson, and Gibbon, that they were almost French in their taste, language, education, and conception of men.

Tickler. But what of Macaulay?

North. He admits that his history has "life, clearness, unity—qualities which appear to be wholly French;" but he thinks him, nevertheless, unphilosophical; denies him to be a genuine artist; and judges his work to be without ease, grace, lightness, vivacity, and refinement, in which respects Macaulay differs from an Athenian, and, of course, from a Frenchman.

Shepherd. Why, sir, those are the very qualities in which we have always thocht he excelled. Does he mention Sir Walter ?

North. Yes, James, but much in the same manner. He describes his novels as false pictures of a distant age.

Shepherd. The deil he does ! But why ?

North. Because he pauses, according to M. Taine, "on the threshold of the soul, and in the vestibule of history, selects in the Renaissance and the Middle Age only the fit and agreeable, blots out frank language, licentious sensuality, bestial ferocity."

Tickler. It would be strange had he done otherwise.

North. He thinks it possible, however, that the *Waverley Novels*, notwithstanding their defects, may last a century. In short, it is clear that, in M. Taine's opinion, George Sand and Balzac are Scott's superiors in the domain of fiction.

Shepherd. I dinna remember that you spoke o' Tennyson whilst referring to our poets. Does he mak mention o' him ?

North. Yes, James ; he gives praise to our Laureate, but prefers Alfred de Musset. Even in painting, in which we might have expected no stinted praise, he describes our attempts at the picturesque as revolting.

Tickler. In what respects, then, does M. Taine's history merit the praise you accorded ?

North. Well, to speak truth, the book is, after all, a masterpiece. It displays marvellous familiarity with our literature. Mr. Taine's style is clear and sparkling ; his appreciation is just, his criticism

is generally sound, and his descriptive powers are great. I know, indeed, few passages finer of their kind than his descriptions of the beauties of England, especially that of an August morning in Oxford; or more truthful or picturesque than the vivid and eloquent contrast which he draws between English and Parisian life.

Shepherd. Then you like the book, after a'?

North. Yes, James; for a more interesting and, on the whole, a more reliable history of our literature I do not know; nor, indeed, one that is worthy of comparison with it in knowledge of its subject, in eloquence, or in acute criticism. It is, however, written with the obvious intention of proving the theory—a favourite one of M. Taine—that all writings are, in character and style, such as the circumstances of the age foster. His object is, therefore, to show that “the human mind flows on with events like a river;” that the characteristics of an author are peculiar to the age which produced them; and that the like salient features cannot be reproduced in later times. Now, it seems to me that although all works bear more or less the impress of their age, yet in their essential traits they are the creation, not of circumstances so much as of individual talent or genius, the peculiar bent of which may reappear in later times and under varying conditions. The circumstances which, in M. Taine’s view, fetter each writer as with a girdle of steel, and mould his genius to their own form, prove, as M. Sainte-Beuve has said, “a help to the individuality and the personal originality, stimulating it, urging it, even making it act or react in a greater or lesser degree, but without *creating* it.” *

* *English Portraits*, p. 261.

Shepherd. And Mr. Boove is richt, for genie is like the delicious scents which fill the air after a shower o' rain has distilled aromas frae beds o' flowers. The sweet fragrance is perceptible, but ye canna aneleeze it and apportion to each flower its ain share o' the perfume. And it maun be just as impossible to label any work as the outcome o' a special class o' circumstances—as if, forsooth, M. Taine could hae predicted its advent had he known o' the conditions which surrounded the owther. Not so; for the mind o' man resembles in this respect the bonny bee which buzzes amang the flowers, and draws hinny frae those in which, as it kens instinctively, it is to be found. Man selects frae the circumstances that surround him those which are maist favourable to his genie, and adapts them to his ain purposes; and ane nicht as reasonably try to discover frae what flowers, and in what precese proportions, the hinny has been gathered, as to attempt to refer ony writing to the influence o' the conditions existing in the age in which it was produced.

Tickler. The task might not, after all, be difficult to one whose olfactory nerves are as keenly sensitive as were those of Coleridge, whose sojourn at Cologne called them into activity. He says—

“ I counted two and seventy stences,
All well defined, and several stinks.”

Shepherd. Weel, I suppose that, being a feelosopher, Coleridge wad perhaps be able to discriminate between a stench and a stink, though maist folk wad think the distinction verbal, and no real.

North. It is not philosophers alone, James, who

possess this nicety of scent ; for the author of *Hours with the Mystics*—a very learned and interesting book, by the way—says that “the noses of eminent saints have been endowed with so subtile a sense that they have detected the stench of concealed sins, and enjoyed, as a literal fragrance, the well-known odour of sanctity ;” and he names Sir Philip Neri as having been so eminently endowed in this respect as to be “frequently obliged to hold his nose and turn away his head when confessing very wicked people.”*

Shepherd. I wish he'd seen the Glasgow gander served, and smelt the——

Tickler. Spare us, James, the recollection of that ineffable stench.

Shepherd. But, talkin' o' smell, canna ye scent the coming o' anither jug o' toddy ?

North. Alas ! that poets should have to be classed with philosophers and saints as being pre-eminently endowed with prophetic noses.

Shepherd. Isna the scent delicious ? Stronger and stronger it becomes as Awmrose advances, so that I could tell within a fut the distance between us. And noo, here he comes.

[*Enter* AMBROSE *with a jug of nectar* ; *which the trio are left discussing when GURNEY makes his escape.*

* Vol. II. p. 162.

II.

SCENE I.—*Blue Parlour. Time—Seven o'clock.*

NORTH, SHEPHERD, and TICKLER.

Shepherd. What, after a', Mr. North, is education? Is it merely the acquisition o' knowledge, or disna it mair properly include the cultivation o' the morals, and the development o' the higher poo'rs o' mankind, such as imagination and the loe o' the beautifu'?

North. The least important part of education is the acquisition of knowledge; and that Plato held this view is shown by the fact that in his *Dialogues* his object is to excite the mind to activity, rather than to store it with knowledge possessing no creative power, and which does not lead to the development of the intellectual powers. This opinion was shared by Sir William Hamilton, who defined the end of education to be the general and harmonious evolution of the faculties and capacities of the mind in their relative subordination,* and who claimed for the study of philosophy a high place—even the highest—in a truly liberal system of education; and he founds this claim, not on the paramount dignity of the pursuit, but as the best gymnastic of the mind.†

Tickler. The fact appears to be that men rate their own favourite studies as of pre-eminent import-

* *Discussions*, p. 270.

† *Lectures on Metaphysics*, vol. i. p. 14.

ance. Plato * and Hamilton give the preference to philosophy ; Huxley to physical science.

Shepherd. That seems natural, for none of us wad like to admit that the study to which we are individually attached isna the noblest and the best.

North. Men view education from different stand-points. But what says Huxley in favour of physical science ? Does he dispute the claim of philosophy to be the most invigorating of studies ?

Tickler. He never even mentions it.

North. Do you mean that, in treating of education, he does not discuss the comparative utility of philosophy as a study ?

Tickler. I do. Neither in his address on "A Liberal Education," nor in his speech on "Scientific Education," does he once refer to it. In his view, "education is the instruction of the intellect in the laws of nature, under which name" he "includes not merely things and their forces, but men and their ways ; and the fashioning of the affections and of the will into an earnest and loving desire to move in harmony with those laws."†

Shepherd. Then he thinks Pop wasna far wrang when he said—

"The proper study of mankind is man."

North. I do not clearly understand Huxley's meaning. Pray enlighten me, Tickler.

Tickler. He appears to make success in life the sole aim of education, for he says that the really great and successful men in this world are those who take honours in nature's university, who learn the laws

* *Phædrus.*

† *Lay Sermons*, p. 36.

that govern men and things, and obey them. I, on the contrary, agree with Professor Cairnes * in holding that "the qualities required for the accumulation of wealth are by no means the highest human qualities."

North. Then Huxley falls into the error denounced by Hamilton and Stuart Mill, † that of classing those studies as most useful which have a value only to man considered in his relative, lower, and accidental character as an *instrument*, forgetting that, although philosophy be "of no immediate advantage in preparing the student for many of the subordinate parts in the mechanism of society, its utility cannot, on that account, be called in question, unless it be asserted that man 'liveth by bread alone,' and has no higher destination than that of the calling by which he earns his subsistence." ‡

Tickler. Froude, § too, advocates the study of science in preference to philosophy; and, after all, North, may they not be right? Is not this the problem to be solved—How can man best prepare himself to grapple with the world?

North. Assuredly not. The true object of education, as Mill well remarked, is "to call forth the greatest possible quantity of intellectual *power*, and to inspire the intensest *love of truth*," and not the teaching of "the empirical knowledge which the world demands, and which is the stock-in-trade of money-getting life." || But even if the latter were

* *Fortnightly Review*, vol. xvii. New Series, p. 78.

† *Dissertations*, vol. ii. p. 195.

‡ Hamilton's *Lect. on Metaphysics*, vol. i. p. 7.

§ *Short Studies*, Second Series, p. 340.

|| *Dissertations*, vol. ii. pp. 193, 201.

the true end of education, I should still maintain that philosophy would be a better preparation for life than science ; for I hold that the man whose faculties have been most highly developed, and not he whose education has consisted in the acquisition of scientific truths, is best armed for the battle of life.*

Tickler. Would you, then, recommend the teaching of philosophy in all schools, in preference to the usual studies? Montaigne, you remember, pronounced the elevated and exquisite opinions of philosophy to be unfit for business.

North. True, and for this reason : that minds of too subtle a character are apt to become lost amid their various suggestions, and thus lack one of the greatest elements of success—decision. I certainly should not wish to see philosophy supersede other studies. In elementary schools primary education can alone be given, for until the rudiments are mastered the student 'is incapable of proceeding to the higher departments of knowledge. And in middle-class schools, where the pupils rarely remain beyond the age of sixteen, it would be unwise to make philosophy part of the curriculum. But in our universities a different principle ought to guide the teachers, for there the students are advanced intellectually beyond the sixth-form schoolboy. Professor Seely, in his admirable essay on "Liberal

* "The importance of studies is not measured by their success. . . . The true nobility of human intelligence consists less in the results which it obtains, than in the end which it proposes to itself, and in the efforts by which it essays to attain that aim. Experience is much, but it is not all. And, besides, who shall prove to us that facts are of more value than ideas, discoveries than researches?"—Professor Ribot's *English Psychology*, p. 14.

Education in Universities," has truly remarked that they should accustom the student to despise mere getting on and surpassing rivals in comparison with internal progress in enlightenment, and has forcibly exposed the evils of the tripos system—a system which leads both teachers and students to reject "as worthless for educational purposes the greatest questions which can occupy the human mind, and attach unbounded importance to some of the least."* He instances the neglect of philosophy as arising from this system, and compares our present barrenness in ideas, contempt for principles, and Philistinism, with the love of speculation which characterized us as a nation in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Shepherd. Then he thinks we lack speculation as much as the ghaist in *Macbeth*?

North. And is it not a sad and humiliating reflection that England, once at the head of European philosophy, was content, until within the last thirty years, to borrow her speculation from the Germans? And to what was this attributable?

Shepherd. Ye maun answer your ain question, sir, for Tickler canna, and I shallna.

North. It was attributable to the principle on which our universities have educated—the principle of utility.

Tickler. But surely our country cannot be said to lack philosophers?

North. On the contrary, England and Scotland are in the van of philosophy, and are doing more than France and Germany together. The works of

* *Lectures and Essays*, p. 195.

Stuart Mill, Spencer, Bain, Carpenter, Maurice, Mansel, Ferrier, and a host of others, will bear comparison with, nay, claim pre-eminence over, any philosophical works which foreigners have given to the world during the period of which I have spoken. But it is not to our universities that we are indebted for these ; and so long as the principle of utility is followed there, so long shall we, *as a nation*, be deficient in that intellectual power, in that intense and loving search after truth for its own sake, which was once our boast, and which enabled us not only to prosecute material prosperity with success, but to teach philosophy to the world.

Shepherd. Strang, sir, thaigh maybe true.

North. And to end as I began, with a quotation from Hamilton——

Shepherd. Nay, sir, ye hae a bad memory. Ye began wi' Plawto, and no wi' Sir William.

North. Really, Mr. Hogg——

Shepherd. Gae on, sir, and I promise no to interrupp ye again.

North. I hold, with Hamilton, that “the comparative utility of a study is not to be principally estimated by the complement of truths which it may communicate, but by the degree in which it determines our higher capacities to action.”*

Tickler. What say you, James ?

Shepherd. I canna judge, Tickler, for it's but little education I ever received.

Tickler. Ah ! Jamie, but you have received a far higher culture than mere knowledge can impart, for your imagination and feelings have been called forth

* *Discussions*, p. 41.

into activity by long and loving communion with nature. Happy is he who

“Walks the wild heath, and sings his toil away.”

Shepherd. Weel do I remember gaen to school when I was a wee bit laddie, sent there, I jalouse, mair to be keppit out o' mischief than to learn lessons. I can fancy I see the old man wha ruled us wi' a high hand and a prood heart. Hoo we trembled when the shadows o' displeasure flitted across his wrinkled broo!

“A man severe he was, and stern to view.”

But what'n a hypocrite he maun hae been; for he used to sit, like Shenstone's schoolmistress, “disguised in look profound,” thaigh it was little learning that troubled him. It mattered little to me, however; for if he'd been as patient as Job, and as wise as Solomon, I couldna hae learnt muckle in the few months I spent at schule.

North. As Tickler has said, your whole life has been a course of education. God gave you genius, and it fed upon the scenes amid which your life passed; and meditation and reflection imparted to you a wisdom not to be gained from books; and so it was that, as you trod the hills of Ettrick, the muse breathed into your bosom the divine flame,* and the vision of bonny Kilmeny became present to your imagination; and on the moors and in the forest you were

“ — by Nature taught
To breathe her genuine thought,
In numbers warmly pure, and sweetly strong.”

* “Tu spira al petto mio celesti ardori.”

Tasso.

Shepherd. Oh, sir, but ye hae a' a poet's feelin', because ye hae a' a poet's imagination, and the twa are inseparable.

Tickler. There is a charming Essay by Lamb on *The Old and New Schoolmaster*, in which he draws a characteristic picture of the fine old pedagogues, the Lilys and the Linacres, who, "revolving in a perfect cycle of declensions, conjugations, syntaxes, and prosodies," renewed constantly "the occupations which had charmed their studious childhood," and from whom life slipped at last like a day.

Shepherd. And what says he o' the modern ones?

Tickler. He describes them as being expected to know a little of everything, to be superficially omniscient, and to be ready to seize every occasion to inculcate something useful.

Shepherd. Mercy save me frae siccan a life! Fancy, no to be able to forget, even for ae single moment, his occupation; no to be able to luk upon a flower without haen to remember to what genus it belongs; or a rock without observing its strata, and deciding whether it belongs to the primary, secondary, tertiary, or alluvial group. I wadna exchange my uncultured admiration for nature, for a' the learning o' a Bacon; for thaigh I cannot hear the suggestions which it is ever making to the man o' science, I feel its spirit playing upon my soul, and I become entranced wi' the sweet melody which aye fills him who is able to enjoy

" — the boundless store
Of charms which Nature to her votary yields."

North. What a fine verse, James, is that from which you have quoted! Give us the whole of it.

Shepherd. I canna ; but ye hae it by heart, or ye wadna ask me to receet it. Gae on, sir.

North.—

“ Oh, how canst thou renounce the boundless store
Of charms which Nature to her votary yields ?
The warbling woodland, the resounding shore,
The pomp of groves, and garniture of fields ;
All that the genial ray of morning gilds,
And all that echoes to the song of even,
All that the mountain’s sheltering bosom shields,
And all the dread magnificence of heaven ;
Oh, how canst thou renounce, and hope to be forgiven ! ”

Tickler. It is very fine, and merits the praise that Gray bestowed upon it.

North. To return to our subject. Poetry, James, is truly the gift of heaven, and you, like Cædmon of old, are indebted to it alone for your gifts.

Shepherd. The ainly gift to which I hae ony pretension is that o’ being able to feel the beauty of the outward world, and to gie expression to a few o’ the mony images suggested by the contemplation o’t. And when I roam ower the hills, or sit quietly down among the lichens in the forest, thochts rise like exhalations in ma mind, and when they are joyous I can best express them in verse ; for aften when they are sad I feel a melancholy tenderness too deep for utterance.

North.—

“ The meanest flow’r that blows can give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.”

The truth is, James, that though poets must experience the feelings they desire to describe to others, they must have become crystallized, so to speak,

before they can be uttered in song. That which is too keenly felt cannot be expressed, just as the mourner, choking with grief, is unable to do more than press the hand of the comforter ; so it is only when

“ The feeling and the sound are fled and gone,
And the regret they leave remains alone,”

that the poet is able to embody them in verse.

Tickler. North, like Festus, has

“ — a heart to feel
The great and lovely, and the poetry
And sacredness of things.”

Shepherd. And, after a', what is the brief span of our existence but, at the best, a bright hour o' sunshine, in which, like butterflies, we sun oursels, and then drap off to sleep ? The thoughts, and feelings, and glories o' the inner world which imagination creates and peoples, gae to make up the life o' man, who flutters aboot for a while, and then fa's intil oblivion, to be known nae mair. Such thoughts as these, sir, are verra sad, and would, were it no for religion, lead us to regard life as——

Tickler. What Professor Huxley calls protoplasm.

Shepherd. And what the deil may that be, Tickler ?

Tickler. Protoplasm is, or rather is alleged to be, the physical basis of life, and is common to all living beings.

North. According to this theory, James, the power which vitalizes the human frame is identical in its nature with that which permeates the animal and vegetable world.

Shepherd. But is't no a very irreligious theory, sir?

North. It matters not, James, how strange or startling such a theory as that of protoplasm may be; man's duty is not to reject truths because they militate against his preconceptions, but to inquire into the evidence adduced in support of them, and to accept or reject them, according as the proofs are insufficient or convincing. If protoplasm be scientifically true, it must be believed, and we have no right to reject it because it seems to drag us down to the materialism we abhor. To receive or reject the teachings of science because its lessons may accord with, or be repugnant to, our religious beliefs, instead of honestly weighing the arguments upon which they rest, is to display an unworthy fear of using aright the reason with which we are endowed, and to revert to the practice of the Schoolmen, who interpreted and ascertained all science by the principles of theology. Nay, has not intolerance and religious persecution often sprung from the aversion entertained by pseudo-believers to have their dogmas questioned and their faculties troubled by doubts as to the soundness of creeds adopted from authority and not from conviction? Was it not this fear that caused the Latin Church to persecute Roger Bacon and Galileo? And is not the same tendency too frequently discovered in relation to science at the present day?

Shepherd. Nae dout, nae dout.

North. Is not Darwin's theory of the *Origin of Species* often studied with a predetermination to reject it, because it is thought to contradict the Mosaic cosmogony? Is not Utilitarianism scouted by many

who have never taken the trouble to inquire into it? Has not, in short, the opposition to all scientific and philosophical research proceeded from a cowardly fear that the result may be such as to disturb the serenity of faith which is without knowledge? To the man whose belief is founded upon knowledge—knowledge obtained, perhaps, after hours of agonized doubt and unbelief—no truths can be unwelcome; for he has the consciousness that the laws which regulate the world must be in perfect harmony with the more mystic and spiritual parts of our nature.

Tickler.—

“The truth is perilous never to the true,
Nor knowledge to the wise.”

Shepherd. Ye surely dinna mean, sir, that ye arena orthodox, but hae a liking for Utilitarianism?

North. Have no fear, James. I was merely denouncing the cowardice which is too often exhibited, of accepting the results of science because of their supposed antagonism to theology.

Shepherd. But didna ye speak of it wi' ower much respect?

North. Pray, James, what is this Utilitarianism which you appear to deprecate?

Shepherd. Weel, sir, I canna just say, but I've a misty sort o' impression that it's no ower gude, or fit for honest folk to talk about. But gin ye've no objection—seein' we're by oursels—I should like you to tell me what it is.

North. According to the Utilitarians, the moral sense is not innate, but is the result of education and other circumstances, although they admit the existence

of such a faculty; whilst the opposite school of philosophy—the Intuitionists—hold that the conscience is an original quality of our mental constitution. The one philosophy makes utility the test of morality, and approves or disapproves of actions according as their tendency is to promote or diminish the happiness of those affected by them; the other finds its standard of morality in an original moral instinct.

Shepherd. Gae on, sir, for I dinna quite understaun.

Tickler. The fact is, James, that Utilitarianism is opposed to religion.

Shepherd. Maybe that's easier said than proved, Tickler.

Tickler. If the moral sense is purely a matter of education, and if there is no difference between the phenomena of mind and those of matter, then has man no free will; and, as the possibility of morality depends on the possibility of liberty, the Utilitarian doctrine is opposed not only to Christianity, but to all religion.

Shepherd. That soun's logical; but what say you, Mr. North?

North. However logical Tickler's argument may sound, his deduction is disputed by the greatest disciple of Utilitarianism—the late John Stuart Mill—who maintained that “the only view of the connection between religion and morality which does not annihilate the very idea of the latter, is that which considers the Deity as not making, but recognizing and sanctioning, moral obligation.”*

* *Dissertations*, vol. i. p. 125.

Shepherd. I wish ye wadna introduce these topics, for na man wi' common sense can reconcile what ye hae just said.

North. Mill's argument is that there cannot be two tests of morality, one internal, the other external. If the moral instincts of man are the true test, then, according to him, religion, being external to that test, can have no force; otherwise the one may, by applying the other, be proved wrong.

Tickler. But Utilitarians themselves apply a double test, if Mr. John Morley's exposition of their philosophy is correct; for he somewhere says "that there is a radical distinction between the kind of conditions which produce the willingness to obey duty, and the kind of conditions which lead to an enlightened and elevated idea of what duty is. If it were otherwise"—I am still quoting the editor of the *Fortnightly*—"we should never be able, as we clearly are able, to forgive or even to praise the agent, while condemning the action; to admit the morality of the motive, while pronouncing on the immorality of the action which sprang from it. For the latter depends upon the consequences of the action, and to be able justly to estimate them is felt not to be a result of virtue merely, but of wisdom, which is virtue and something besides." *

Shepherd. I dinna think ye've quoted the gentleman correctly, Tickler, for there's self-evident and maist palpable contradiction in what ye hae said. Hoo can there be twa totally opposite and irreconcilable standards o' richt; and hoo can an act be immoral when the motive is virtuous? If this could

* *Fortnightly Review*, vol. iii. New Series, p. 333.

be, then wad utility be the standard o' the action, whilst some ither unknown test wad be applied to the actor.

North. I am not surprised to hear that Mr. Morley lays himself open to such easy criticism, for even John Stuart Mill, whilst denying that the motive has anything to do with the morality of an action, allows that it has to do with the worth of the agent,—though I am at a loss to understand how, according to Utilitarianism, there can be worth in the performance of an immoral deed. There is, however, much that is worthy of approval in Utilitarianism ; nor can I think it so radically opposed to religion as Tickler appears to imagine, for it certainly advocates the pursuit of the purest pleasures, from the purest of motives—disinterestedness.

Tickler. Well, I found my opinion upon certain passages in the writings of Mr. Morley, and I'll give you two or three instances where he uses expressions antagonistic to Christianity. He has said that if mankind cannot live without a religion, then that religion, whether it be the religion of humanity, or some *regenerate* form of Christianity, or mere morality highly spiritualized and elevated, will assimilate for its central principle what is the central principle of the Utilitarian ethics—that he is the best man who finds his own highest happiness in promoting the happiness of as many other people as possible.* And again, in his review of *The Ring and the Book*, he speaks of “the unconquerable problem for the Christian believer, the keystone of the grim arch of religious doubt and despair, through which the courageous soul must pass

* *Fortnightly Review*, vol. v. New Series, p. 538.

to creeds of *reason* and life ;” * whilst, in an article on Byron, he characterizes Goethe as the poet of that new faith whose heaven is an ever-closer harmony between the consciousness of man and all the natural forces of the universe, whose liturgy is culture, and whose deity is a certain high composure of the human heart.†

Shepherd. I dinna pretend to understaun what the religion o’ humanity may mean, or what sort o’ a liturgy culture wad be able to compose, but God preserve me frae a religion o’ reason ! What ! Maun we believe naethin’ we canna put intil the form o’ a syllogism ? Shall we deny the fact of life because physiologists havena yet discovered its basis ? Shall we stap boxing the compass because polarization is a mystery ? Shall we, because o’ our inability to explain the principle o’ gravitation, believe that our earth is takin’ a pleasure trip thrae space, and isna held i’ position by a law we canna understaun ? Wheesh, wheesh ! but sic-like nonsense always makes me dry i’ the thrapple ; sae ring the bell, Tickler, for a caulker.

[TICKLER *rings, and motions the order to* SIR DAVID *when he appears.*

And what can reason tell us o’ a future life ? Can it confirm the intuitional sense I hae o’ a future state, or does it simply declare that this idea has been implanted in my mind by education ?

North. Does not the antagonism existing between the rationalist and the theologian arise from a neglect of the religious sentiment by the one, and of reason

* *Fortnightly Review*, vol. v. New Series, p. 341.

† *Ib.* vol. viii. New Series, p. 653.

by the other. The former is so enamoured of the power of reason that he becomes incredulous of aught it cannot fathom, and denies that beyond the realm of knowledge there is a region of faith. The theologian, on the other hand, is so impressed with the truths of religion, and believes so implicitly in all that the Bible teaches, that he is apt to deny to reason many subjects which are properly within its province. So long as the boundaries between faith and reason are not clearly defined and remembered, so long will there be scepticism on the one hand, and, as Locke has remarked, will there be in religion, on the other hand, no room for reason at all; and those extravagant opinions and ceremonies that are to be found in the several religions of the world will not deserve to be blamed. Well would it be if all men were, as Browning has said—

“ Far alike from thriftless learning
And ignorance’s undiscerning.”

Tickler. Your naming Browning reminds me of a beautiful passage in his——

Shepherd. Recet it, Tickler, for I’m aye fond o’ poetry.

Tickler.—

“ I trust in nature for the stable laws
Of beauty and utility—Spring shall plant
And Autumn garner to the end of time :
I trust in God—the right shall be the right
And other than the wrong, while He endures :
I trust in my own soul, that can perceive
The outward and the inward, nature’s good
And God’s.”

North. I was about to remark, gentlemen, that

it is impossible to overlook a fact which must be patent to any one who observes the tendency of modern thought—I refer to the indefinite position occupied by men of science with respect to religion. Although they disavow the charge of atheism, and admit the existence of a God, their creed is, nevertheless, one which it is difficult, if not impossible, to reconcile with Christianity. Their agnosticism is an attempt to reconcile science with theism—to allow the fullest scope to the former, whilst admitting the fundamental basis of the latter. Not being able to account for the existence of matter and its phenomena, they predicate a God, but of this primal cause they profess the most profound ignorance. Like the Comtists, they deny the knowability of the Infinite. How poor a foundation upon which to rest the hopes and aspirations of mankind, is this possible but impersonal God of science! how different to the grand truths of Christianity—truths which breathe the love of a God, omniscient and omnipresent, loving and lovable, the Author of all that science reverences, and the Ideal which the highest manifestations of human love can but feebly imitate! To say that God is unknown and unknowable is to deny the truths of revelation and the monitions of conscience, and by this means to cut away the anchor which keeps us in the haven of peace, and the want of which drifted the early philosophers into the surging billows of speculation.

Shepherd. I wish Sir David wadna be sae lang i' bringing the whisky, for I'm amaist tired o' the subjeck.

Tickler. Let us not forget, however, that science has, in many respects, operated beneficently upon

theology. It has, as Mr. Lecky has justly remarked,* robbed theological systems of much of their harsh and gloomy character; and it relieves men's minds of the notion that the most disastrous of natural phenomena are penal inflictions, and shows them to be the result of general laws. It has thus dispelled the terrorism produced by the calamities of life, and substituted a just view of the multitudinous contrivances which are designed for the well-being of all created things.

North. The great evil attendant upon discussions — whether theological or scientific — which disturb settled beliefs is, as Hume† has remarked, that it causes many to lose all idea of truth and falsehood in religion, inasmuch as they are unable to discriminate between the claims of the rival teachers.

Tickler. Still, man's chief aim ought to be the acquisition of truth, this being of more importance than the avoidance of the evil you have suggested. Joubert says that "the experience of many opinions gives to the mind great flexibility, and establishes it in those which it believes the best."

Shepherd. It seems to me that the search after truth, like the way frae the Delectable Mountains to the Celestial City, lies through the mist and darkness, briars and thorns of the Enchaunted Ground, and that not a few of those who journey along it fa' asleep i' the Bower, and never hear the heavenly music, or see the celestial visions of the laun o' Beulah.

Tickler. Searching for truth is like descending

* *The Rise and Influence of Rationalism in Europe*, vol. i. p. 287. Fourth Edition.

† *History of England*, vol. iii. p. 206.

into the bowels of the earth in order to possess ourselves of its treasures.

Shepherd. An ye ever been doun a coal-pit, Tickler?

Tickler. Never.

Shepherd. Weel, but I have, thaigh I shallna be tempted to repeat the visit.

North. Why not, James?

Shepherd. It was fearsome. The sight o' the shaft, reachin', as it did, intil the verra depths o' the earth, made me shudder. But I didna like to beat a retreat, sae I entered the cage, and just as I had ta'en fast haud o' the cross-bar, somebody struck the signal rope, and the sound reverberated through the blackness o' the yawning pit. It reminded me of the noise that was heard in Chaos, when Satan's legions

“ — rag'd

Against the Highest, and fierce with graspèd arms,
Clash'd on their sounding shields the din of war.”

I then descended wi' fearsome rapidity. My legs quaked, and I thocht I should faint, and it was a wunner I didna when the steam was cut aff; for a' at once the motion seemed to be reversed, and I fancied that instead o' descendin', I was reascendin' the pit. When the cage stopped, and I got oot, my legs gave unmistakable signs o' insecurity, just as if I'd been on board a ship tossed in the Atlantic. Howsomever, I tried to appear unconcerned, and lauched loudly to deceive the miners as to my state. I am doubtful whether I succeeded, for I know I was as pale and cauld wi' fear as was Ulysses when he descended into Hades. When I had somewhat recovered, I was led, in a stoopin' posture, intil the workings, which sug-

gested to my mind the circles o' Dante's hell, and I shouldna hae been a bit surprised had Lucifer himsel' turned up to bid me welcome in what appeared to be his ain regions. I was unco glad to return to the shaft, and to step once more intil the cage. Then the frichtfu' signal was again sounded, and we immediately began to ascend rapidly. Hoo glad I was to reach the tap, and to see once more the blue vault o' heaven, ye may imagine. But isna Sir David comin' wi' the whisky? Hoo ye twa can luk sae indifferent to its advent, I canna tell, thaigh I jalouse it's a' affeckit.

Tickler. If I look so, James, then do my looks belie me, and my appearance is as deceptive as that of Lovell's "Maori deacon, who has only to strip and he becomes once more a tattooed pagan, with his mouth watering for a spare-rib of his pastor."*

Shepherd. Haw, haw! what'n a pictur!

North. Lovell is an admirable writer. His remarks on Dryden and Shakespeare exhibit a fine critical faculty, and are at once discriminating and sensible. Less brilliant than Poe, his judgment is far sounder. His style, too, is clear and elegant, and at times even eloquent, and he avoids the recondite and often unintelligible theories into which many critics are led in their attempts to appear profound.

Shepherd. That's the faut o' German creetics, I'm tauld.

North. In which respect they present a marked contrast to the French, who excel in criticism, their habit of grasping clearly and expressing tersely contrasting favourably with the verbose adumbrations of many German writers.

* *Among my Books*, p. 200.

Tickler. And what of English critics? They, at least, strive to be intelligible. Take, for example, Jeffrey, Sydney Smith, Macaulay, and Mill, or, to come to those still living, Carlyle, and Arnold, and——

Shepherd. Christopher North! the greatest o' them a'; for while his imaginative power enables him to soar aloft wi' the poet, and to catch the mony coloured rays which, like prismatic hues, flash across the vision, his feelosophical knowledge and insicht enable him to follow and rightly to estimate the reasonin' o' the maist original and abstruse writers on mental science. Added to this is an admiration o' natur, and a profound loe for a' that is true and beautifu' in man, which mak it easy for him to enter intil the mysteries o' thocht and feelin', of joy and sorrow, and to illumine e'en the saddest pictures o' life wi' touches o' sympathy and Christian reflection which nae ither creetic has ever reevalled.

North. You make the old man blush, my dear James.

Shepherd. Weel, it's a' true, and I challenge the best o' your contemporaries to reeval—I wullna say your poems, thaigh they are fu' o' wisdom and true poetry—but your *Recreations* in genuine humour and graphic painting, or your *Essays* in creetical and imaginative power. But whaur the deevil is Sir David?

Tickler. Here he comes, James, bearing the jug, and shrouded in steam not unlike “trailing clouds of glory.”

[Enter SIR DAVID, who places the jug and glasses upon the table, and then “evanishes like vapour in the aire.”]

Shepherd. Quick with the tumblers! And noo ye can gae on with the conversation.

Tickler. Speaking of Poe, what think you, North, of *The Raven*?

North. It is very clever, but lacks imagination; and if he composed, or, as Garrick would have said, "concocted," it in the manner he describes, this is not to be wondered at, for although it is as essential to have method in poetry as in science, yet this must not be confounded with patchwork.

Shepherd. Hoo did he write it?

North. He first fixed upon the length of the poem; then upon the impression—that of beauty—to be produced; then upon its tone; then upon the refrain—"Nevermore"—and the variation of its application, and so on.

Tickler. Whatever may have been his *modus operandi*, the poem is a very fine one.

Shepherd. Not gin it lacks, as Mr. North says it does, imagination.

North. The poem is unquestionably a remarkably clever one, but I fail to detect in it any of that revealing power which is the grand characteristic of the imaginative faculty. Its rhythm is perfect, and the idea embodied in the poem is well evolved, but it does not contain a single line or even expression of poetic beauty.

Tickler. I fear, North, your judgment is warped by the recollection of his article, "How to write a *Blackwood* Article."

Shepherd. Na, na, I'se no believe that o' Mr. North.

North. Nor does Tickler. In fact, I admire Poe's

writings as much, probably, as he does, their weirdness being especially attractive to me. With his literary judgments, however, none of us would agree. Indeed, a writer who thinks Horne's *Orion* one of the noblest (if not the very noblest) poetical works of the age, and who evidently esteemed it more highly than *Paradise Lost*, is a critic in whose verdicts we cannot concur. He was, nevertheless, a man of fine genius and exquisite literary taste.

Shepherd. Weel I haena read mony o' his writings, but I maun confess that I was very favourably impressed wi' *The Raven*.

North. Shall I give you a parody of it?

Tickler. By all means, for we shall then have an opportunity of judging how you succeed in imitating its rhythm.

Shepherd. Noo, sir.

NORTH *recites.*

THE DYSPEPTIC TAILOR.

One ev'ning, both wild and dreary, I stitched, though wan and weary,
 At a pair of curious breeches which are worn, alas ! no more.
 While thus stitching, nearly napping, suddenly I heard a laughing,
 As of some one who was passing, passing by my creaky door.
 'Tis some casual," I muttered, "passing by my cottage door—
 Only this, and nothing more."

You may guess it was not cheering, such a laughing to be hearing,
 Whilst I was stitching upon a table on my kitchen floor ;

But although I kept on working, with th' intent my thoughts of
 burking,
 I imagined some one lurking close outside my cottage door ;
 So slowly I descended and with tremor oped wide the door ;—
 Darkness there, and nothing more.

To my work I reascended, and again my back I bended,
 To resume the weary labour which, alas ! I'd learned of yore ;
 But before my thread was ended, a strange feeling was engendered
 At my heart, as I heard, blended with the sad wind at my door,
 The selfsame, hideous, mocking laugh that I had heard before—
 May I hear it never more !

But I paused a moment only, for I felt so very lonely,
 That I wished by constant working to think of it no more ;
 So I plied my needle madly, but, alas ! I did it badly,
 Whilst the low fire flickerèd sadly, spurting light athwart the
 floor—
 For my thoughts and eager glances were turn'd to the haunted
 door ;—
 Darkness there, and nothing more.

E'en the stillness, whilst unbroken, seemed to me a certain
 token
 That the sound I erst had heard would bestride the wind once
 more,
 And with elfish glee and madness, mimic tones of real gladness—
 As if in mockery of sadness—as it passed my cottage door,
 Threatening that the blithe and joyous light should never enter
 more ;—
 Oh, never—never more !

But few stitches had I taken, when, my fears to reawaken,
 The damnèd laughter rose again outside th' insentiate door ;
 Then, with palpitating bosom, and corded veins well-nigh frozen,
 I struggled vainly to cozen back the courage which theretofore
 Had kept misery from out mine heart, whenever press'd full sore
 With sorrow's chastening lour.

Ah, full well do I remember how the bleakness of December
 On that evening seemed to settle within my heart's inmost core ;
 When with anguish so tormented that my life I e'en lamented,
 And, with senses nigh demented, I staggered across the floor,
 And seized upon a phial containing *nux*, and nothing more—

It was *nux*, and nothing more.

When the pilules I had swallowed, what beatitude then followed !
 For my heart regained the freedom it was wont to feel of yore ;
 And the wind, instead of mocking, seemed to me to be unlocking,
 With a motion as of rocking, my heart's blessed, radiant store ;
 And my soul was full of gladness, for that laugh I heard no
 more—

Ah, never more—never more !

Tickler. Bravo, North !

Shepherd. It isna badly done, sir, considerin' the
 diffeeculty o' the task. But what'n a memory ye hae,
 to be sure.

Tickler. M. Baudelaire, in his preface to Poe's
 works, expresses the opinion that the United States
 was for him only a vast prison, and that his life was
 one long effort to escape the influence of what he
 terms its antipathetical atmosphere, and he draws
 the inference that there is no more pitiless dictator
 than that of public opinion in democratic societies.
 Now, little as I admire American institutions, I must
 confess that this slur upon democracy seems to me
 altogether unwarranted, either by the personal history
 of Poe, or the history of democratic governments. It
 may be true that in America the rapid growth of
 material prosperity has led its people to attribute too
 great importance to the mere possession of wealth.
 But this is an error not confined to democracies, for
 we find Horace * satirizing the influence possessed by

* Bk. 1, Ep. 6 ; Bk. 2, Sat. 3.

the moneyed men of his day. To charge Americans with inability or indisposition to recognize literary genius is surely unjust. As to Poe, his misfortunes were the result, not of national ignorance or uncultivated taste, but of the errors into which his vices plunged him. M. Baudelaire's assertion that public opinion is more pitiless in America than in any other free country is no more true than is his theory that the love of liberty gives birth to "the tyranny of fools." Was this the result in Greece or Rome? The proposition is tantamount to saying that political liberty has a contracting and debilitating effect upon nations, whilst a restricted exercise of the judgment and of speech has an invigorating influence upon the critical and creative faculties of mankind.

Shepherd. That wad indeed be strange.

North. And yet there is more truth in M. Baudelaire's theory than you imagine. It is, indeed, that of De Tocqueville, from whom M. Baudelaire has probably borrowed it.

Tickler. Pray explain.

North. In De Tocqueville's view the influence of the majority in America is so powerful as to be more despotic than the most absolute monarch—the authority of a king being purely physical, its exercise controlling the actions of the subject without subduing his private will, whilst "the majority possesses a power which is physical and moral at the same time; it acts upon the will as well as upon the actions of men, and it represses not only all contest, but all controversy."* It is thus that the majority raises very formidable barriers to the liberty of opinion, and

* *Democracy in America*, vol. ii. p. 267.

as there can be no literary genius without freedom of opinion, it follows that America can produce but few great writers.

Tickler. How do you reconcile this with the literary history of Greece in the Periclean age?

North. You forget that Athens, under Pericles, was a democracy only in name, as Thucydides well knew—the brilliant Athenian prime minister having had the genius to combine “the tyrant’s patronage of literature with the political life of a free constitution.”*

Tickler. What, then, of Rome?

North. Well, the flowering time of her genius was the age of Augustus, not that of the Republic.

Tickler. But Augustus was the descendant and representative of Marius.

North. True; but in his relations to the two opposing parties in the state he was, as Merivale has remarked, no other than a second Sulla.† With respect, however, to Poe, his vices were, as you have said, the great stumbling-block to his success. Had Shelley’s description of Alastor been applicable to him, how different would his career have been!

Shepherd. Give us the description, sir.

North.—

“By solemn vision and bright silver dream
His infancy was nurtured. Every sight
And sound from the vast earth and ambient air
Sent to his heart its choicest impulses.
The fountains of divine philosophy
Fled not his thirsting lips : and all of great

* Mahaffy’s *Social Life in Greece*, p. 130.

† *History of Rome*, vol. v. p. 227.

Or good or lovely which the sacred past
In truth or fable consecrates, he felt
And knew."

Shepherd. Ah! wad that he had been content to nurture his genie by the contemplation o' Nature's holy mysteries. How often has it happened that the world has had to regret the career o' its intellectual giants, men like Byron, and Shelley, and Burns—men gifted wi' titanic power, but wha spurned the fetters which seemed to chafe them as the bit does the untamed steed. And, after a', we shouldna forget that thaigh mediocrity finds it easy to be respectable, this verra pleeancy springs frae their never haen been tempted—never haen felt the paroxysms o' passion, which like a whirlwind engulf stronger and mair emotional natures. Ye remember what Burns says o' these highly proper folk—

“O ye douce folk, that live by rule,
Grave, tideless-blooded, calm and cool,
Compared wi' you—O fool! fool! fool!
How much unlike!
Your hearts are just a standing pool;
Your lives, a dyke.”

Tickler. And when such men observe the social code, even when their desires urge them to throw them to the winds, is it that the principles of virtue are strong in them, or because they let “I dare not” wait upon “I would”?

North. I am inclined to agree with Landor that “great men too often have greater faults than little men can find room for.”*

Shepherd. Genie is like the sea—magnificent in

* *Life and Works*, vol. ii. p. 94.

its beauty, sublime in its poo'r,—at times terrible in its throes o' passion, at ithers cawm as the radiant dome o' heaven. And, after a', it is, aiblins, better to resemble the lake, which, thaigh at times ruffled by the fitful breezes breathed by pain and temptation over its face, is incapable o' the fury that can transfigure the ocean into a symbol o' tragic despair. And yet, thanks be to God! the shallowest lakelet is aften the clearest; and thaigh it canna reflect sae perfectly the highest peaks, it is still deep aneuch to bear aboon the stanes and peebles the human life embarked upon it, and which it drifts wi' a gentle motion intil the haven o' peace. You, sir, hae verra beautifully compared man's destiny to the dim and melancholy strand, against which the billows of life hasten silently:—

“ So hurry we, right onwards, thoughtlessly,
Unto the coast of that Eternal Land;
Where, like the worthless billows in their glee,
The first faint touch unable to withstand,
We melt at once into Eternity.”

Tickler. Come, come, gentlemen, we're becoming doleful; so let's change the topic.

Shepherd. Sae rather feelosophical, for true feelosophy is the handmaid o' religion. Some o' the happiest moments in our lives are thae in which we verge nearest to the pathetic—when we experience “the sanctity o' grief”—when the fountain o' our thochts shoots upward to catch the licht o' heaven. Some men, nae dout, try to shun a' that reminds them o' th' inevitable future, because it is linked wi' solemn thochts and mysteries, forgettin a' the while that the longer they exclude frae their minds the idea

o' death, the greater will be the shock they maun feel whan they catch a glimpse o' our universal enemy, just as the sands are runnin' oot.

Tickler. Very true, James.

“He that lacks time to mourn, lacks time to mend.
Eternity mourns that. 'Tis an ill cure
For life's worst ills, to have no time to feel them.”

Shepherd. You were right, Tickler. Gin we gae on in this mood, we shall frichten Gurney, wha'll mak his escape frae the cupboard, and future generations'll hae to mourn the unrecorded *Noctes*, as much as we do the lost tragedies o' Æschylus.

North. And yet the wonder is that so many of the writings of antiquity have been preserved to us, seeing that the art of printing was unknown, and that their preservation depended upon the multiplication of written copies. It is, no doubt, true that in Rome the means of supplying copies was equal to the demand, and that the public readings of which we read in Horace, Ovid, Pliny, and Juvenal, served to give publicity to works, and provided a summary test as to whether they were worth the expense of publication. And even in those days popular books were produced not only in great numbers, but at a cheap rate. Still it is clear that by this method but comparatively few writings could have a chance of surviving, for the most eminent writers even of modern times are known by but a fragment of their works.

Tickler. Is it, however, a matter for congratulation that the “Sosii Brothers” have been succeeded by our modern publishing firms; the works which teem from their presses being so numerous, and often

so bulky, as to deter men from attempting to grapple with them ?

North. We have, at least, a greater choice presented to us, whilst the difficulty of selecting the best books is really not so difficult after all, for our magazines and reviews indicate to us those which most merit perusal.

Tickler. And yet who can doubt that many works of great excellence have been carried into oblivion by the crowd of books which is ever thronging the high-ways of literature ?

Shepherd. I'm thinkin', Tickler, that ane o' your articles maun hae been rejected recently.

Tickler. Why so, James ?

Shepherd. Because your tone is that o' a rejected contributor.

Tickler. When that happens, James, you may look to your own laurels.

Shepherd. Na, na, Mr. Tickler ; dinna flatter yoursel' that Soothside and Ettrick are on the same level. I willingly grant ye the possession o' muckle common sense, as weel's some leetle literary ability, but you are still in the valley, whiles I'm up aboon, amang the immortals o' Parnassus. Ye maun write somethin' that the world willna willingly let dee afore ye claim equality wi' the owther o' the *Queen's Wake*.

Tickler (singing).—

“ For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.”

Shepherd. Sae is it wi' the works which genie has penned. Like the brook of which ye were singing, they brichten, and beautify, and fructify a' the ages thrae which they pass,—noo glistenin' in the sunlicht

o' praise,—then hid frae the public ee by the owerhangin' weeds o' neglect,—again emergin' intil some bonny glade where primroses and forget-me-nots, and ither flowers o' lowly birth but sweetsome breath, bloom in a' their lovliness,—and then flittin' slowly past toons, as thaigh afeard to mingle their melody wi' the vice * o' human life and activity,—until at last they become lost in the mighty sea. Sae has it been, sae will it be, wi' Shakspeer himsel'.

North. No doubt your illustration aptly describes the past history of his works. Received with applause in his own day and generation, they passed into oblivion during the Civil Wars and the Commonwealth; then they emerged again into notice, called from neglect by Addison's papers in the *Spectator*. The glory thus heralded gathered strength in the writings of Lessing, of Goethe, and of our own countrymen, and now it shines with refulgent splendour, men of every shade of thought vying with each other in indicating the beauties of his works—their marvellous wealth of thought, their prophetic insight, their poetic and philosophic harmoniousness being dwelt upon with the enthusiasm of a Gervinus and the genius of a Carlyle.

Shepherd. And noo, sir, as I'm waxin' unco hungry, I'se ring the bell and order in supper.

Tickler (to NORTH). Like "little Sid" †—

"Expecting supper is his great delight."

[*Bell is rung.* AMBROSE and his retinue bring in supper, and GURNEY emerges from the car of Dionysius.

* Voice.

† Dryden's *Essay upon Satire*.

III.

SCENE I.—*The Snuggery. Time—Seven o'clock.*

Present.—NORTH, TICKLER, and SHEPHERD.

Dinner.

Shepherd. I maun congratulate you, Mr. North, as weel as Tickler and mysel', upon the bill o' fare, which, unlike ordinar', writings, becomes the mair interestin' by reason o' its length.

North. Then you do not hold with Armstrong that—

“Such various foods, though harmless each alone,
Each other violate.”

Shepherd. Weel, sir, doctors are a weel-deservin', benevolent race o' men, but I'se no* accept a prescription when it is written in rhyme instead o' Latin, for ye may be sure it will contain little wisdom, and still less poetry. Noo, why shouldna sole, saddle-o'-mutton, duck, pigeon-pie, and turkey—no to mention the etceteras—lie down thegither in savoury fallowship, ilka assisting the ither to produce that happy harmony between mind and body, without which true happiness is impossible?

Tickler. Horace, however, equally with the doctor,

* No == not.

denounces the evil effects of *variæ res*. Nevertheless, if I had James's power of digestion——

Shepherd. Pray dinna mak attempt to be foolish, Tickler; for I ken na ane wha can, wi' less justice, complain o' want o' appetee, or of imperfect digestion. Indeed, your voraciousness constitutes, I venture to say, ane o' the main defecks o' your character, for it leads you at times to eat as thaigh denner were a business, and no a pleasure—a mistake as sinfu' as it is intolerable. Dinna ye ken that——

“’Tis man himself aye makes
His own God and his hell?”

It rests wi' him alane, either to mak meal-times fruitfu' o' happy discourse and intellectual enjoyment, or a sort o' sacrifice to be offered up, wi' a lang face and an unthankfu' hairt, to the necessities o' our vile bodies. Isna the intellect allied, in some mysterious and inexplicable manner, wi' the body? And arena its tendencies to gude or evil aften attributable to the state o' the stamack? Indeed, I'm by nae means certain that the best means o' remedyin' much o' the evil in the warld isna to fin' a remedy for indigestion, for, sure eneuch, no a few o' the calamities o' life proceed frae this cause.

North. De Quincey somewhere refers to the intimate relation subsisting between the intellect and temper, and the digestive functions, and shows how human comfort and welfare would be promoted by a stricter attention to the digestive system.

Tickler. And Lord Byron wittily says——

“I will not dwell upon ragoûts or roasts,
Albeit all human history attests
That happiness for man—the hungry sinner—
Since Eve ate apples, much depends on dinner.”

North. Sydney Smith, too, has added his testimony to the pleasures incident to a good dinner, which he describes as a great triumph of civilized life.

Tickler. And has not Disraeli told us, in *Henrietta Temple*, that everything depends upon the circulation?

Shepherd. Nay, no everything. But as to the opinions of those wha happen to be troubled wi' dyspepsia, biliousness, or flatulency, they just gae for what they are worth, and that isna ower much. Speakin' for mysel', I maun admit that I loe to sit down to a sax or seven o'clock denner, no on accoont of the lateness o' the hour, but because, sae far as ma experience goes, the excellence o' the meal increases wi' the lateness o' the hour; and I am bun' to confess that my observation o' this fack has led me to dout whether th' auncients really knew what a gude denner was, seeing that they dined about noon.

Tickler. But if they dined early, they supped late, and no doubt this meal was then, as it is now, the most enjoyable, because the most convivial.

North. Xenophon, in the *Banquet*, draws a charming picture of an Athenian supper-party, at which Socrates was present. In the intervals of conversation they witnessed the performances of dancers, listened to music, and laughed at the witty sallies of a professional jester.

Shepherd. I amna sae sure that I suld hae cared to meet Socrates at an evening pairty, and I can weel understaun why he wasna ower popular in Athens. A man wha's aye pruin' himsel' to be wiser than ither folk canna be liked, for he pays himsel' a compliment at their expense. But, besides this, his talk seems to

hae been too fu' o' deaelectic, and, in my opinion, muckle o't isna entertainin', thaigh I'll admit that a little adds zest and variety to the conversation, else I suldna tolerate it as much as I do amang oursels. But isna the denner ready?

North. I expect it will be served shortly.

Tickler. Speaking of Xenophon, North, how charmingly he describes the loves of Panthea and Abradâtes, the beauty and constancy of the wife finding an appropriate counterpart in the bravery and devotion of the husband.

North. Many of the most touching love stories ever told are to be found in the ancient classics.

Shepherd. But ye surely dinna pretend to appreciate them, sir? If so, then I hae done ye an injustice in attributin' your antipathy to married life to lack o' the tender feelings. But gin I hae been mista'en, and if it be that ye canna meet wi' a pairtner about your ain age wha's suitable in a' respects, why dinna ye fin' oot a wee bonny lassie, and educate her yoursel', sae that she nicht loe ye till dounricht madness, auld thaigh ye be.

North. The old man has too much good sense, my dear James, to follow the example of Molière's Arnolphé,* who did exactly what you have recomended to me, and whose lady love, after all his trouble, became enamoured of a younger and handsomer swain.

Shepherd. Weel, nae dout youth and beauty maun tell upon a young lass, and I dinna know a bonnier sicht than that of twa young hairts, fu' o' loe, and enraptured wi' each ither, fondly imaginin' that their

* *L'École des Femmes.*

bliss will survive a' the vicissitudes o' life, and become immortal. And, after a', arena they richt; and is it no true that the music which fills their lovin' hairts is but the prelude to the sweeter melody to which they'll listen when they ascend aboon the sky, and catch the echoes o' tha chords, the harsher tones of which they had felt on earth, but whase perfect harmony can ainly be known in heaven?

North. You call to my memory, James, that beautiful passage which Lorenzo pours into the willing ears of Jessica, as they sit by moonlight discoursing of love:—

“How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank!
 Here will we sit, and let the sounds of music
 Creep in our ears; soft stillness, and the night,
 Become the touches of sweet harmony.
 Sit, Jessica. Look how the floor of heaven
 Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold.
 There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st
 But in his motion like an angel sings,
 Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubins:
 Such harmony is in immortal souls;
 But, whilst this muddy vesture of decay
 Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it.”

Shepherd. Isna it beautifu'? No a word too much, nor one that could be supplanted by ane mair appropriate. Hoo ony mortal man came to possess a' the genie o' Shakspeer, the deil himsel' couldna explain. In him seem to hae been allied a' the gifts that natur' can bestow, a' that philosophy can teach, a' that imagination can impairt, a' that poetry can breathe intil a soul harmonious as the laws o' the outward warld, serene as the blue firmament, and—— But here comes Awmrose at last.

(Enter AMBROSE.)

Noo, Awmrose, pit a' the dishes upon the table at ance, sae that we shallna hae to wait for a change o' coorses. Timothy will tak the fish, North the pie, and me the rest.

Ambrose. Pardon me, Mr. Hogg, but——

Shepherd. Weel then, let me hae the dyucks and turkey. And, by way o' a beginnin', I'se trouble you, Mr. Tickler, for fish. But where's the yill, Awmrose?

Ambrose. It will be here in a moment, sir.

(Enter SIR DAVID with a jug.)

Shepherd. Oh, sirs! luk how it

“—— reams o'er the brink,
In glorious faem.”

North (taking the jug.) Thank you, Sir David.

[*North buries his face in the foam.*]

Shepherd. What'n an eclipse! Ainly the ooter circle o' his face is visible: a' the rest is hid by the faem.

North. 'Tis nectar for the gods.

Tickler. Had it not been for a confounded fish-bone that almost choked me, I should have struggled for the first draught, James. Fill up again, Ambrose.

Shepherd. This is better than dining aff bits o' made-up dishes ca'd entries.

Tickler. *Entrées*, James.

Shepherd. Ye can pronoonce it as ye like, Tickler, and I claim the same privilege for mysel'.

North. James requires a Leander to form his taste, and to introduce him to dishes like the in-

comparable *escalopes de laitances de carpes à la Bellamont* spoken of in *Tancred*; for he would then confess that cookery is an art, equally with painting and music, and that joints, though admirable in their way, are not to be compared with the *entrées* he appears to despise.

Tickler. Why, North, you'll become as eloquent over *entrées* as Bob Fudge was over a French breakfast.

Shepherd. And wha may he be?

Tickler. You surely know Moore's *Fudge Family in Paris*, James?

Shepherd. The pie luks verra invitin', Tickler, for it reeks like a volcano, and is fu' o' gravy; sae I dinna mind gie me a taste o't.

North. The absence, in the present day, of books of the *Fudge Family* class is an indication of the improved tone of our literature, as compared with that of preceding times. Poems satirizing persons of social or political eminence are things of the past: instead of vilifying men's characters, we attack their principles.

Tickler. And yet the satires of Butler, Dryden, Pope, and Churchill are among the most interesting of the writings of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. How admirably are the peculiar tenets and bearing of the Puritans ridiculed in *Hudibras*; with what scathing power is Shaftesbury portrayed in *The Medal*, and Shadwell held up to ridicule in *Mac Flecknoe*; with what trenchant power and biting scorn is the Laureate Cibber raised to the throne of Duncedom in *The Dunciad*; whilst Churchill——

North. Damn Churchill!

Shepherd. Weel, weel, sir, ye hae dune that in Mawga * lang sin' ; sae let Tickler finish.

Tickler. Notwithstanding North's aversion to Churchill—which is perhaps attributable to his satire against the Scotch in the *Prophecy of Famine*—his poems reveal great power, not only of invective, but of imagination.

North. Were I to admit this, I might still ask with Cowper—

“ Yet what can satire, whether grave or gay ?
It may correct a foible, may chastise
The freaks of fashion, regulate the dress,
Retrench a sword-blade, or displace a patch ;
But where are its sublime trophies found ?
What vice has it subdued ? whose heart reclaim'd
By rigour, or whom laugh'd into reform ? ”

Tickler. It is strange that one who displayed his greatest power in satire should have asked these questions.

Shepherd. Satire may be aye richt aneuch to some minds, and may be verra divertin', but, after a', it is but a degenerate form o' the divine art. Prose is gude aneuch to tak off the weaknesses o' men, and to heap up ridicule upon what ane doesna approve ; but poetry has a nobler end than this. When it reaches the height o' its mission, it seeks to arouse no † laughter, but feelings mair akin to sadness than to mirth ; to cast intil the depths o' man's soul the reflex of a' that is grand and beautifu' and ennobling, sae that, lukin' intil the profoond depths o' his heart, man may see there the visions o' gudeness and purity which poesy has implanted. Wha wad venture to

* *Blackwood's Magazine.*

† Not.

compare ony o' the poems Tickler has mentioned wi' the songs o' Burns? Nane hae been made better or happier by them, but thousans hae felt the humanizin' influences o' *The Cottar's Saturday Night*, and shed tears whilst reading *Highland Mary*. True poetry is the expression o' feelings nurtured in solitude, and of associations gathered frae fond communion wi' natur'. Weel micht Sir Walter write—

“Call it not vain :—they do not err,
Who say that, when the poet dies,
Mute Nature mourns her worshipper,
And celebrates his obsequies ;”

for no man can be a true poet unless he has communed with Natur', and learnt to interpret her teachings. I havena muckle respect for city poets, I maun confess. Gie me the

“Land of brown heath and shaggy wood,
Land of the mountain and the flood.”

Tickler. And you may give me a wing of that duck, James.

Shepherd. Gin I gae on talkin' a' the while, I'se mak but a puir denner.

North. But, James, is not variety one of the great charms of poetry ?

Shepherd. Nae dout ; but thaigh there may be a variety o' subjects, and diversity in the mode o' treating them, the principle is the same. I shallna attempt to define what the principle o' poetry is, for I should fail, as ithers hae failed before. The impression produced upon twa persons by the same landscape micht—nay, in a' probability, wad—be verra different. The state o' their minds at the maement ; the relative

complexity o' their associations ; their diversity in a' that constitutes thocht, feeling, imagination, wad necessarily produce a great dissimilarity, if no divergence, in the effect produced upon them. So with poetry. It may assume every imaginable form of metre ; it may deal wi' subjects the maist diverse ; and yet, if the work be a true poem, it will enable us to realize the truth of Wudsworth's saying, that

“ —the intellect can raise,
From wairy ords alone, a pile that ne'er decays.”

North. Your definition of the poetic principle sounds somewhat mystical, James.

Shepherd. Noo, sir, ye ken a' the while just what I mean, sae dinna pretend no to. If ye mean that it is possible to define everything wi' mathematical precision, pray try to describe the prismatic hues o' the rainbow. We've a' seen and admired them a thousan' times, and yet I question whether ony o' us could convey a correct, or even an intelligible, idea o' them by mere description. And sae it is wi' poetry. It cannot be adequately defined, nor can it be properly understood, except by those whom natur' has gifted wi' the divine afflatus. But I shallna pursue the subject, sir, for I havena half finished ma dinner, whilst ye twa hae devoured a quantity that maun be surpreesin' to Awmrose whan he comes to side awa'.

Tickler. One of the strangest remarks ever penned by a philosopher is that contained in Bentham's *Rationale of Reward*, where he says that, prejudice apart, the game of push-pin is of equal value with the arts and sciences of music and poetry. As Swift seemed to prefer a monkey to a woman because it is

more diverting and less mischievous,* so Bentham gave push-pin the preference over poetry, on the ground that, whilst both furnish pleasure, the former is always innocent, whereas the same cannot be said of the latter.

Shepherd. Nane but a feelosopher wad ever have made sae fuilish a remark.

North. But Bentham was too profound a thinker to have overlooked the fact that, whilst push-pin may furnish pleasure, poetry furnishes not only pleasure, but profit?

Shepherd. No aften that in a pecuniary sense, eh, sir?

Tickler. He certainly has overlooked it, and seems, indeed, to give the preference to push-pin, because it is always innocent, which cannot always be said of poetry. But, after all, it is not astonishing that Bentham should have made so absurd a comparison, for he confesses to have derived no enjoyment from the perusal of poetry, and to have read Milton as a duty, and *Hudibras* for the story and the fun; though why he should have considered it a duty to read anything the only end of which, in his opinion, was to give enjoyment, but which, in his case, failed to do this, I cannot understand.

Shepherd. And do a' Benthamites judge poetry by this feelosophical standard?

North. Certainly not; indeed, one of his most ardent admirers, the late John Stuart Mill, wrote a most discriminative and interesting essay on *Poetry and its Varieties*, in which the poetic principle is very ably expounded.

* *Letter to a very young Lady on her Marriage.*

Tickler. And one of the most eminent of philosophers—Descartes—even wrote poetry.

Shepherd. Then I may continue to believe that poets are something nobler than acrobats? Noo, that's consoling, for I shouldna be verra weel satisfied to think that the *Queen's Wake* was ainly a kind o somersault in verse. But gin ye've finished denner, I'll ring for toddy. [*Rings.*]

North. Bentham must have forgotten the circumstances according to which, as he has himself stated, the value of a pleasure depends. In his essay on the principles of morals and legislation, he lays it down, if I remember rightly, that such value depends upon its intensity; its duration; its certainty; its propinquity or remoteness; its fecundity; its purity; and its extent. Now, surely the pleasures of the imagination are superior in all these respects to the pleasure to be derived from push-pin.

Tickler. It is strange that even Plato, in his *Phædrus*, ranks poetry as inferior to trading, although trade was despised by cultured Athenians.

Shepherd. Somehow or ither, there seems to be a natural and fundamental antagonism between poets and feelosophers, or rather, between poetry and feelosophy. This arises, I suppose, frae the opposite character o' the twa—the ane making beauty and the emotional nature o' man its theme, whilst the ither is gien to abstractions concerning the origin and nature o' mind and maitter, thaigh wi' nae ither result, as I'm told, than an unbelief in baith. But maybe it isna true that some feelosophers have come, after lang study and profound meditation, to doubt the existance o' maitter.

North. The fact is undeniable, James; and, indeed, it must be confessed that it is impossible to prove by logical reasoning the existence of an external world.

Shepherd. The deevil it is! Do you mean till affirm that ma ain consciousness doesna assure me, beyond a' dout, that, for example, a rose is a thing composed o' a nummer o' petals cuddled up clase thegither, and a' restin' upon a stem which sways wi' the wecht o' its ain beauty?

North. According to Berkeley, what we perceive are only *ideas*, and ideas can exist only in the mind. When we speak of matter, however, it is well to define what is meant. Berkeley did not deny the existence of sensible qualities, such as extension, colour, weight, etc., but he held reason unable to prove the existence of a substratum underlying them.

Shepherd. Then Byron was richt when he wrote the lines—

“When Bishop Berkeley said ‘there was no matter,’
And proved it—’twas no matter what he said.”

Tickler. You and I, James, at least are agreed, in spite of these modern disciples of Gotama,* that our consciousness proves conclusively that objects exist distinct from ourselves.

Shepherd (taking a draught of toddy). Sae we are, for I canna be convinced that this toddy isna mair than a modification o' my ain mind—a mere idea. Gin ye can show me that I'm wrang, I shall be verra glad, for then I shall aften indulge, without payin' for't, sae shublime a reflex o' ma ain intelligence.

North. You are simply urging the old objection

* Buddhism doubts the actual existence of the visible world.

against Berkeley's theory, that it contradicts the evidences of the senses.

Shepherd. I dinna quite understaun the bishop's theory, and amna, therefore, prepared to say whether it does or does not contradick ma senses.

Tickler. Does not he——

Shepherd. Nae, let Mr. North gie his ain version o't.

North. Berkeley admitted, as well as you, the existence of that which can be seen and touched.

Shepherd. Weel, that's a comfortin' admission.

North. Our reason leads us to infer that the sensible qualities of which we are conscious must have a *something* upon which to rest, but all philosophers are agreed as to the impossibility of our ever knowing what that something is; for consciousness is limited to ourselves, to that which passes within us—all other ideas, all the knowledge we may have respecting the *non-ego*, being merely inferential.

Shepherd. Gae on, sir.

North. If this be so, what certitude have we that the effects produced upon us by phenomena are identical with the things themselves; in other words, that the ideas produced in us by the qualities which we perceive are true representatives of *things*? The example which James has hit upon—that of a flower—happens, luckily, to be one which Berkeley has used for the purpose of illustrating and explaining his philosophy. You assume that an external thing resembling a flower exists, and that your sensation is produced by it, as a reflection in a mirror is produced by an external object.

Shepherd. Just sae, sir.

North. But dive deeper into consciousness, interrogate yourself, and you will find that the comparison of the mirror is an assumption made only to *explain* the facts of consciousness, not given *in* those facts. Moreover, granting the assumption, you will then make the mind *immediately* conversant with its ideas *only*; for, assuming that objects reflect themselves in the mirror, the mirror itself knows only the reflections: those it knows *immediately*; the objects it knows *mediately*, *i.e.* through the reflection.

Tickler. Bacon has made a similar remark in the *Organum*.*

Shepherd. Dinna interrup', Tickler.

North. Therefore the only knowledge we have of things is that communicated to us through ideas or sensations.

Shepherd. Weel, what then?

North. How then can these ideas exist unperceived?

Shepherd. The deil himsel' couldna' answer that.

Tickler. But, North, I have always understood that Berkeley admitted the existence of a permanent basis for these ideas?

North. So he does, and lodges it, during the intermission of our actual sensations, in the mind of the Divine being. Later philosophers have, however, corrected this weak part of his theory, by defining this permanent element to be only a possibility or potentiality of sensations not actually felt.† Mill, for

* "And the human intellect is like an uneven mirror on which the rays of objects fall, and which mixes up its own nature with that of the object, and distorts and destroys it."—*Novum Organum*, Rev. A. Johnson's trans.

† *Examination of Sir W. Hamilton's Philosophy*, p. 193.

instance, maintained that as the sensations experienced at different times are not the same, though exactly similar, the assumption of a permanent object, either mental or material, is gratuitous, that which is kept in existence being but a potentiality of sensation.*

Shepherd. But you arena a Berkelian, sir ?

North. No, James ; I am a natural realist.

Shepherd. Which means then, I tak it, a kind o' human biped, lang in the leg, strang in bane and muscle, weel developed baith mentally and physically, gien to guid livin' and late hoors, and unco fond till hear himsel' discourse o' poetry and feelosophy,—ane that can, whan he has breathed the pure air o' the forest and caught somewhat o' the enthusiasm—aiblins akin to genie—of one o' his freens no a'thegither un kent to fame, soar up aboon this sublunary warld, and bring down to mortals nae sae gifted as himsel' some o' the flowers which bloom in the paradise of imagination.

North. Tut, tut, my dear Shepherd ; a natural realist is not an animal, but one who holds certain philosophical opinions.

Shepherd. Weel, ane wha holds feelosophical opinions maun, I jalouse, be human ; and as baith man and woman are classed in a' Natural Histories—frae Buffon's to the admirable ane published by Mackenzie—amang mammals, *ergo*, a' feelosophers, whether natural or unnatural realists, are animals. Such being the case, y'll see the propriety o' qualifying your remark.

Tickler. He, he, he !

* *Fortnightly Review*, vol. x. New Series, p. 515.

North. If you do not wish me to proceed, Mr. Hogg, of course I have done.

Shepherd. Na, na ; I canna gae to bed until you have restored ma mental equilibrium. Ye've sae mystified me by your feelosophical discourse, that gin I retired to rest in my present state o' mind, I suld hae the nightmare, and dream o' feelosophers eatin' up each other as the lean kine ate up the fat kine in Pharaoh's dream—Aristotle eating Plawto, the Epicureans bolting the Sceptics, and sae on, till we reached Bacon and the Scotch feelosophers. It wad, after a', be an amusin' sicht to see Broon devourin' Reid, Hamilton despatchin' Broon, and Mr. Mill makin' but a pair meal aff Sir William. But gae on, sir, wi' your explanation.

North. A natural dualist, James, is one who accepts the veracity of his own consciousness, which, he believes, indicates the knowledge of an *ego* and a *non-ego* as a primitive duality.

Shepherd. But how do you get over the bishop ?

North. Of course, James, all natural dualists admit that "mind and matter exist to us only in their qualities ; and these qualities exist to us only as they are known by us, *i.e.* as phenomena. It is thus merely from *knowledge* that we can infer *existence*, and only from the supposed repugnance or compatibility of *phenomena*, within our experience, are we able to ascend to the transcendent difference or identity of *substances*." * Sir W. Hamilton has traced the errors of Berkeley, and a host of other philosophers holding doctrines of representative perception, to the fact of their having presumed that the *relation of knowledge*

* Sir W. Hamilton's *Discussions*, p. 61.

infers an *analogy of existence*; whereas, as he has shown, this principle is nothing more than an irrational attempt to explain what is, in itself, inexplicable.

Tickler. Pray explain, North, the difference between natural realism and cosmothetic idealism.

North. With pleasure. The former is based, as Sir William has explained, upon the theory "that our cognitions of extension and its modes are not wholly ideal," and that there is "competent to us, in an immediate perception of external things, the consciousness of a really existent, of a really objective, extended world——"

Shepherd. That souns sensible.

North. That is, not that we can know the primary qualities of matter, but that phenomena are not mere modes of mind. Now, cosmothetic idealism, which Hamilton * denounced as the most inconsequent of all philosophical systems, holds not only that we cannot know matter, but that we cannot know its attributes except through representative perception.

Shepherd. The deil tak' me if I understaun what ye mean by representative perception; but if the terms imply that I amna to believe that some things are white and ithers black—which I tak to be qualities o' maitter; then do they gie the lee direct to ma ain consciousness, which I shall still haud to be mair credible than a' the feelosophers that ever lived. They micht just as weel deny their ain existence, for they can ainly know it frae their ain consciousness.

North. No doubt the facts of consciousness must be accepted as ultimate, otherwise philosophy is impossible.

* *Discussions*, p. 56.

Tickler. Pray, North, in what does Stuart Mill differ from Hamilton concerning our knowledge of an external world ?

North. It would be impossible, Tickler, to give anything like an adequate explanation of the points urged by Mill against Sir William, except by a lengthened exposition of the doctrine of the relativity of knowledge. It may, however, suffice for you if I indicate shortly the main point of divergence between Sir William and his critic. Mill charged Hamilton with holding two contradictory doctrines—the relativity of knowledge, and natural realism. Because he maintained that we have an *immediate* knowledge of the external world, he is accused of denying the relativity of knowledge, inasmuch as such knowledge is of matter as it exists absolutely, and not merely in relation to us.

Tickler. And is not such the fact ?

North. No doubt, if Sir William meant what his antagonist alleges, he would have been guilty of the contradiction imputed to him ; but such is not the fact, for he has repeatedly repudiated this interpretation of his words.

Shepherd. Can you quote instances o' this, sir ?

North. Why, James, to tell truth, my memory—

Shepherd. Nae, sir, dinna affeck to mak light o' your memory, for I know nae man wha has sae little ground for complaint on that score.

North. Thank you, James. In his *Essay on the Philosophy of Perception*, there is a passage which, if I mistake not, runs thus : “ To obviate misapprehensions, we may here parenthetically observe, that all we *do* intuitively know of self, all that we *may* intuitively

know of not-self, is only *relative*. Existence, *absolutely and in itself*, is to us as zero, and while nothing *is*, so nothing is *known* to us, except those phases of being which stand in analogy to our faculties of knowledge. These we call *qualities, phenomena, properties*, etc. When we say, therefore, that a thing is *known in itself*, we mean only that it stands face to face, in direct and immediate relation to the conscious mind: in other words, that, *as existing*, its phenomena form part of the circle of our knowledge,—exist, *since* they are known, and are known, because they exist." *

Tickler. Certainly that is explicit enough—so explicit, indeed, as to puzzle one how so acute a critic as Stuart Mill could have overlooked it.

North. It is certainly strange that he should have done so, especially as similar explanations are given by Sir William, repeatedly, in the notes to his edition of Reid.

Shepherd. Weel, sir, what occurs to me is this: doesna the verra doctrine o' the relativity o' knowledge imply what you ca' self and not-self, an *ego* and a *non-ego*?

North. Scarcely so, James; for, according to Sir William, the knowledge we have of our own minds is relative.

Shepherd. After that I shallna attempt to follow you.

Tickler. But, pray, what does Hamilton mean if, whilst stating that we have an immediate knowledge of the external world, he yet denies to us the knowledge of it as it is *per se*?

North. His meaning is this: that there is com-

* *Discussions*, p. 54.

petent to us, "in an immediate perception of external things, the consciousness of a really existent, of a really objective, extended world," or, in the language of Mr. Mansel, "that *objective existence* does not mean existence *per se*; and that a *phenomenon* does not mean a mere mode of mind."* And now, having explained Hamilton's doctrine of natural realism, pray let me, before quitting the subject, revert to James's suggestion that the doctrine of the relativity of knowledge implies the existence of an *ego* and a *non-ego*. James is perfectly right in this——

Shepherd. But didna ye, nae a moment sin', say I wasna richt?

North. Allow me to conclude my sentence, my dear Shepherd. There can be no doubt that when we speak of a perception as a relation between mind and matter, we naturally imply the presence of both correlatives——

Shepherd. Sae I thocht.

North. But what I intended to convey was, that this relativity is not confined to the perception by the mind of external objects, but that there is, to use Professor Veitch's language, "knowledge by us, in the absence altogether of the relation between an unknown or supposed cause and its impression on the mind. And this knowledge is still properly called relative. We know the acts and states of our own mind; but these are known not as occult causes of impressions on our consciousness, but as the forms of our consciousness itself—not through the medium of an effect or impression which they cause in us, but directly, immediately, in themselves." †

* *The Philosophy of the Conditioned*, p. 82.

† *Life of Sir W. Hamilton*, App. 415.

Shepherd. If the discussion has convinced me of ocht, it is that Butler maun hae been well versed i' metaphysics, or he couldna hae gauged philosophy as accurately as he did, when, in describing Hudibras, he said—

“He knew what's what, and that's as high
As metaphysic wit can fly.”

North. Let us not, my dear James, depreciate philosophy, for, with all its errors and absurdities, it can lay claim to the parentage of logic and science. Indeed, the history of the Hellenic philosophy is the history of the birth of science. But, apart from this, the study which enables men to discriminate with so much nicety confers upon them a power of analysis that has proved of incalculable service in the detection of sophistry and error in other than metaphysical discussions. Nor can it be denied that, as Sir W. Hamilton has observed, “it comprehends all the sublimest objects of our theoretical and moral interest ; that every (natural) conclusion concerning God, the soul, the present worth and the future destiny of man, is exclusively deduced from the philosophy of mind.” * And, like poetry, it adorns and elevates the mind, for it is not

“ — crabb'd and harsh as dull fools suppose,
But musical as Apollo's lute.”

Tickler. The mention of music reminds me, James, that we have not had a song yet ; so pray favour us.

Shepherd. Not unless you ring for mair toddy, for I'm getting dry in the thrapple.

* *Lectures on Metaphysics*, vol. I. p. 13.

Tickler. Agreed. [*Rings the bell.*]

SHEPHERD *sings.*

THE WIDOW MALONE.

Oh, the Widow Malone ! ochone ! ochone !
 Is the taze of my life with her blarney ;
 She says—with a groan—she’s been all alone,
 Sin’ her Donald lost breath at Killarney.
 Oh, Widow Malone !
 Ochone ! ochone !

Sure I’ll not deny, the widow’s black eye
 Makes her just sich a sweet charmin’ creature ;
 That a kiss on the sly, no sowl bein’ by,
 Would be the best thing in all nature.
 Oh, Biddy Malone !
 Ochone ! ochone !

But I’ve aft been told that widows, though bowld,
 Are of all womankind maist desaivin’ ;
 So, for fear o’ being sowld, och ! I’ll niver fowld
 To this bosom anither man’s lavin’.
 Sweet Widow Malone !
 Ochone ! ochone !

“ Away wid ye then ! ye’re like ither men,
 A desaiver, and sich like, my darlint ! ”
 Niver doubt that then I squas’d her again,
 And sware, wid a kiss, she was charmin’.
 Ah, Widow Malone !
 Ochone ! ochone !

By troth ! ye must know, the matter rests so,
 And the widow’s expectin’ to marry ;
 But, arrah ! it’s no go—I’ll not be her beau,
 So it’s long that for me she may tarry.
 The Mistress Malone !
 Ochone ! ochone !

(Enter AMBROSE.)

Ambrose. Did you ring, gentlemen?

Shepherd. Bring in anither jug o' Glenlivet, Awmrose, and pit it doun to Mr. Tickler, wha finished the last jug under a fawse pretence. But what for luk ye sae scared, Awmrose?

Ambrose. The fact is, gentlemen, I've run short of whisky.

Tickler. Well, then, we must e'en say with Stephano—

“When the butt is out, we will drink water.”

Shepherd. But no a drap before.

North. Oh, for the horn of Amalthea!

Shepherd.—

Woe, woe! the toddy's a' suppit.

The warld's at an end sure eneugh.

Woe, woe! the last drap o' Glenlivet

Has gane like a bead o' mornin' dew!

“Alas! that we unhappy men

Its like shall never taste again.”

North. No matter, gentlemen—

“The mind shall banquet, though the body pine.”

Tickler. Poor Ambrose has vanished, horror-stricken.

Shepherd. Maybe he thocht we were gaun to offer him as a sacrifice to Bacchus. It's a pity we didna surround him and chaunt a song after the manner o' the Greek chorus.

North. And how was that, James?

Shepherd. I'se no answer the question, Mr. North,

for nae dout ye're just as weel acquainted wi' the subjeck as mysel', and gin ye arena ye ocht to be.

North. But suppose, James, I am dubious on the point?

Shepherd. It is nae use attemptin' to draw me intil a discussion about the Greek drawma, for I dinna reckon to know ower muckle about it, and shallna discuss what I dinna weel understaun.

Tickler. Surely, James, such a rule is inapplicable to the Noctes, for how often do we converse upon subjects with which we are not fully conversant?

Shepherd. Weel, perhaps it wadna do, Tickler, to press it.

North. If we can satisfy ourselves even of our ignorance upon many questions, our conversation will be of no little service to us.

Tickler. No doubt; and the Shepherd's remark is, therefore——

Shepherd. Weel, weel, Tickler, havena I said that I dinna wish to press the rule too far?

North. Nay, is it not undeniable, James——

Shepherd. Dinna address your remarks sae pointedly to me, gentlemen. It isna poleete.

North. I was merely about to remark, James——

Shepherd. It doesna much maitter what ye were about till remark, for I maun insist upon your rememberin' that no ainly the Shepherd, but Soothside, is present.

North. Really, James——

Shepherd. There ye gae. Because ye canna hae a' your ain way, ye fix upon me twa een mair weird than those o' Poe's Raven. Bee-the-bee, Mr. North, isna that a fine poem?

Tickler. James!

Shepherd. I beg your pardon, Tickler; I didna intend to exclude you frae the question. But is't nae a fine poem?

North. Do you refer to the *Agamemnon* or the *Antigone*?

Shepherd. What the deil are ye talkin' about?

North. Our conversation, Mr. Hogg, was upon the subject of the Greek chorus, and I, therefore, assumed that your question had reference to it.

Shepherd. This comes o' Awmrose fa'in' short o' whusky. I begin to wish we'd pu'd him on the table, and then daunced roun' him in the same way that the three witches in *Macbeth* daunce roun' the pot.

North. Or like the Choragi?

Tickler. Talking of the Greek drama and dancing, what do you think of De Quincey's suggestion that not only the chorus, but the actors, joined in the dance?

Shepherd. Does he say they did, Tickler?

Tickler. He thinks it not improbable. It seems to me, however, that the character of the Greek drama, which was majestic and awful, rebuts the supposition. The Choragi did, undoubtedly, both sing and dance, but they formed no integral part of the performance. Indeed, they occupied the orchestra, which was at a lower level than the stage, and were regarded as mere moralizers, who expressed the feelings of the audience upon the events that were being enacted. The habit of making them dance and sing would, of course, serve to widen the boundary which separated them, in the minds of the audience, from the actors, and would also deepen, by comparison, the tragic gloom which surrounded the characters.

North. No doubt it did ; but this can scarcely be urged as an argument, inasmuch as the drama was of a much later date than the choric song. The addition of monologue to the chorus seems, indeed, to have been made shortly before the time of Æschylus, who, by adding a second actor, created the Athenian drama. Although the dialogue thus became the principal feature of the play, the chorus was interwoven with it, and continued to be sung as before. Even in the *Suppliants* of Æschylus—which is thought by many scholars to be the earliest of his plays extant, though Professor Plumptre thinks the *Persians* of older date—the interest centres in the chorus, and not in Danaus or Pelasgus.

Tickler. True ; but in the later tragedies of Æschylus, as well as in those of Sophocles and Euripides, the chorus is subservient to the dialogue, and is altogether unconnected with the action. It seems, therefore, improbable that when the actors joined in it, they either sung or danced.

Shepherd. Sae I should think, Tickler. Just fancy Hawmlet either singing or dancing after his interview with the ghaist ; or Macbeth takin' a turn while Banquo's ghaist was, aiblins, practising his attitudes ahint the scene.

North. Why, James, you suggest what would be as ludicrous on the English, as the representation of love would have been on the Attic stage. Fancy, as Brimley, in his charming *Essays*, wittily remarks, "Romeo, *major humano* by ten inches of cork sole, sweeping along the stage with a drawing-room train of dowager dimensions, and bawling, 'I would I were a glove upon that hand,' through the sort of instru-

ment with which the captain of the *Bellerophon* speaks the *Arrogant* half a mile off." *

Tickler. It would be as ludicrous as the sight of a modern bishop and his flock engaged in a choric dance similar to those exhibited at the solemnities of the *Gymnopædia*.

Shepherd. Haw, haw, haw ! but ye're waxin' wutty the nicht.

Tickler. But to return to the subject. Might not an argument against De Quincey's theory be deduced from the fact mentioned by Grote : that whilst the choruses in the Attic dramatists are chiefly Doric, their dialogue is Attic ?

Shepherd. I dinna ken.

North. It is undeniable that the actors did occasionally mix with the chorus, and must, therefore, have sung. Their part in the choral ode, as De Quincey remarks, was, however, always in the nature of an echo, or answer ; and although they would, consequently, intone these answers so as to avoid dissonance, it by no means follows that they further identified themselves with the chorus by joining in the dance.

(*Enter* AMBROSE.)

Ambrose. Pardon me, gentlemen, for venturing to offer you a bottle of champagne as a substitute for the whisky, which has, unfortunately, run out.

Shepherd. You needna apologizee, Awmrose, for I dinna know a beverage at a' comparable to champagne, e'en thaigh it be guseberry.

Ambrose. It is Roederer's, sir, and I trust——

* George Brimley's *Essays*, p. 207.

Shepherd. Weel, then, uncork it. [AMBROSE *does so.*] Oh, but it luks gran'—bricht as tears, and sparklin' as a mountain rill. Noo, gentlemen, let's drink to Awmrose.

North. Mr. Ambrose, your health.

Tickler. Ambrose, may your shadow never grow less!

Shepherd. Awmrose, a' happiness to you, and mind no to fret about the whusky. Hoo it surges in the mooth, and then melts awa', leavin' a fragrance which is indescribable, as, indeed, a' that is grandest, and sweetest, and maist beautifu' in this world is.

Ambrose. Gentlemen, I thank you for your kindness.

[*Exit.*

Shepherd. What'n a modest fallow he is, to be sure! But ae single glass is barely sufficient to cool the mooth, sae let's hae anither ere it ceases to sparkle.

[*The trio drink accordingly. A sigh escapes from the cupboard.*

What the deil was that?

North. What's what, James?

Shepherd. Didna ye hear't, Tickler?

Tickler. No, James. What was it you heard?

Shepherd. I canna say; but it sounded like a sigh

“—— more sadly breathed
Than winter's whispering of the fallen leaf.”

Tickler. It must have proceeded from the cupboard.

Shepherd. Puir Gurney!

North. Your quotation, James, is very beautiful;

and though it seems familiar to me, I cannot remember where it occurs.

Shepherd. Weel, sir, I really canna tell wha wrote it, or where I hae read it ; for, somehow or ither, bits o' passages like it root themsels in my memory without my knowin' hoo or when.

North. Oh! now I remember. It is from *Philip van Artevelde*.

Shepherd. It may be, thaigh I havena read it. Is it a poem ?

North. It is a dramatized romance by Sir Henry Taylor, and is one of the finest in our language.

Shepherd. Then I maun read it, thaigh I'm no muckle gien to reading drawmas, no e'en exceptin' Shakspeer's.

North. And yet, James, dramatic poetry has not unfrequently been pronounced the highest form of your art.

Shepherd. Nae, sir, it's no airt wi' me, for poetry was aye to me a revelation and no a study. Like Pope—

“ I lisped in numbers, for the numbers came.”

Tickler. The Muses appeared to James as they did to Hesiod, whilst he fed his flocks, and gave to him the gift of poetry and song.

Shepherd. Shak hauns, Tickler, for wi' a' your fauts—and the mither wha bare you couldna wi' ony decency deny ye the possession o' your fair share o' them—you are, if no the wisest, at least my best freen,—excepting Mr. North and thae, wha are ever glad to welcome ye baith to the forest. I wunner, thaigh, ye dinna come up to Ettrick aftener.

Tickler. Ah, James, too frequent visits might make us averse to the city. If Johnson could ask—

“For who would leave, unbribed, Hibernia’s land,
Or change the rocks of Scotland for the Strand?”

how much more should we feel parting with the mountains and the braes, the moorland, and the shade of Ettrick and the forest!

Shepherd. I’m nae sae sure that ye arena, after a’, fonder o’ the toon than the kintra, or that, whilst ye can wax yeloquent in praise o’ the beauties o’ the forest, ye are no unlike Horace, wha, in spite o’ his praise o’ a kintra life, wasna sorry to quit it for the turmoil and saturnalia o’ the city. As to Dr. Johnson, he was never sae happy as when wending his footsteps under Temple Bar. And yet I ’dout whether there was ever a truly great poet wha didna, frae his verra sowl, prefer the kintra to the toon.

Tickler. How about Shakespeare?

Shepherd. Weel, if Shakspeer hadna attuned his lyre to a’ the wonderfu’ harmonies of natur’ before he became a man about toon, he couldna hae written plays aboundin’ wi’ sae muckle insight intil its mysteries.

Tickler. And Milton?

Shepherd. He maun^h hae been a true lover of natur’, or he cauldna hae written *L’Allegro*, nor have drawn those immortal pictures which a’ future ages hae deemed worthy o’ the garden of Eden.* And have not Thomson, and Beattie, and Scott, and

* Dr. Johnson, however, says, “His (Milton’s) images and descriptions of the scenes or operations of nature do not seem to be always copied from original form, nor to have the freshness, raciness, and energy of immediate observation.”—*Life of Milton.*

Wordsworth, and Burns, and Keats, and Tennyson, been indebted to nature's lore for the thochts that live in their noblest strains? Ainly her votaries can be true poets, not those whose hearts are—to quote your ain words—

“ —to the joy
That dwells within the Almighty's outward shrine,
Senseless and cold.”

The city may sharpen the intellect, but it dulls, not fires, th' imagination.

North. I fear it is too true, James.

Shepherd. Nay, sir, ye needna speak sae despondingly o' the fack; for you wadna hae been able to write articles which are the glory o' our periodical leeterature, nor hae been able to discriminate sae nicely between the true and the fawse in poetry, nor to appreciate it sae justly, hadna you drank freely at nature's fount, and seen visions which ainly the true poet sees. I thank God for ha'in' gien me the capacity to enjoy that inward life which, independent o' outward circumstances, creates a' warld o' its ain, and enables me to

“ Find tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and good in everything.”

Tickler. After all, James has only expressed a partial truth in attributing such paramount importance to the influence of the outward world in fashioning true poets. No doubt, it operates to call forth many of the deepest and purest emotions in man, but “in truth,” as has been well remarked, “the highest attraction of natural objects is imparted to them by a fictitious process of investing them with human feelings. The sun and the moon, the winds

and the rivers, are less engaging when viewed as mere physical agencies, than when they are supposed to operate by human motions and hopes, loves and hates." * Experience is surely of great importance to the poet, and in speaking of experience I embrace all that the heart of man in its unfathomed depths is capable of feeling, and all that the best instincts of humanity can evolve. Not joy nor sorrow alone, but both, in all the intensity of a personal experience, are essential to him who would truthfully depict man's moral and intellectual nature. Not, surely, to Milton's love of and familiarity with nature, are we to attribute the sublimest passages in *Paradise Lost*, but to that experience of the world's insufficiency to satisfy the soul's longings, which, in his sad and chequered life, had led him to pursue

" Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme."

And as it was with him, so must it be with all truly great poets—

" They learn in suffering what they teach in song."

Shepherd. Gae on, sir.

Tickler. So again with Bunyan, who, in his immortal allegory, depicts with poetic insight and truth not only the glories of the land of Beulah, but also the inward fears and secret misgivings of the journeying sinner. And so too with Cowper, and Burns, and Tennyson ; for it has been, and must for ever remain, true that only those who have loved most intensely, suffered most acutely, sympathized most deeply, can depict these feelings with sufficient vividness to make them felt by their readers. The duke was able to

* *Mind and Body*, by Professor Bain, p. 7.

find sermons in stones because his experience of the sweet uses of adversity had furnished him with a fund of reflections which the commonest things in nature were able to arouse.

North. It is, indeed, too true that, of all ennobling influences, those arising from suffering are the most potent and abiding, and that

“Where sorrow’s held intrusive and turn’d out,
There wisdom will not enter, nor true power,
Nor aught that dignifies humanity.”

But with respect to the influence of the physical world upon the mind, James certainly seems to me to place too exclusive a value upon it. That an intimate acquaintance with the beautiful and the sublime—whether in nature or in art—operates powerfully in moulding the poet’s mind, and determining the bent of his genius, is of course an obvious truism. Nor can it be denied that, as Tickler has remarked, a personal experience of the joys which stir the heart with ecstasy,—of the sorrows which oppress it as with the shadow of the grave,—leave behind them impressions too deep ever to be forgotten, but which will find expression in the poet’s works. And yet are there not writers who have, perhaps, never tasted of the sweetest joys, nor drunk deeply of the bitter cup, nor held familiar converse with the glories of external nature, who have nevertheless rivalled, and even surpassed, all others in the power of unveiling the mysteries of the human heart? James has cited Shakespeare in support of his views, but I am not aware that he can be said to have communed with nature as did Thomson or Wordsworth,—nor, so far

as we know, did he suffer or enjoy in a greater degree than falls to the lot of common humanity.* And yet with what felicity he invokes the terrible and the beautiful in nature, and with what unrivalled power he sounds every note in the gamut of human passion! Genius more than compensated for what he lacked of personal experience or learning, and enabled him to transcend

“— all that insolent Greece or haughty Rome
Sent forth, or since did from their ashes come.”

Shepherd. Weel, then, we'll a' be content to stick to our ain opinion about the matter, for our differences shallna prevent us frae drinkin' anither glass. Sae fill up again.

[*The glasses are re-filled, and quickly re-emptied.*]
I fear, sir, that this is a verra luxurious, no to say sensual, generation. I wunner what our grandfathers, or even our ain pawrents, wad say, gin they could see us sippin' champagne, instead o' the accustomed caulker o' whusky? I fear that the tendency of modern civilization, as it was of th' auncient, is evil rather than gude.

North. Rather let us hope, James, that we shall

* Carlyle, however, says, “Doubt it not, he (Shakespeare) had his own sorrows: those *sonnets* of his will even testify expressly in what deep waters he had waded, and swum struggling for life;—as what man like him ever failed to have to do.”—*The Hero as Poet*. And Gervinus says, “Had he (Shakespeare) not drunk so deeply of the cup of passion, he would scarcely have depicted with those master-touches the power of sensuous courses; he would scarcely have pictured with such fervour and depth the charm of their allurements and the curse that lies in their excess. Had he not once crossed the threshold of crime, how could he so accurately and profoundly have penetrated into its most innermost recesses.”—*Shakespeare Commentaries*, p. 34.

be preserved from the vices which followed in the train of luxury in Greece and Rome, for we possess what they lacked—an ennobling religion. It would indeed be a deplorable result if, notwithstanding this, some future Juvenal should be able to charge modern civilization with the crimes and the vices that were but too truthfully attributed to the old; and if it should ever be said of us, as it was said of the Romans—

“ — saevior armis

Luxuria incubuit victumque ulciscitur orbem.

Nullum crimen abest facinusque libidinis, ex quo

Paupertas Romana perit.”

Tickler. I doubt, after all, whether modern civilization is, to a great degree, similar to that of the old world. We possess so many advantages in respect to fields of activity open to our countrymen, that there is not, it appears to me, the same danger of their degenerating into mere voluptuaries, as was the case in the days of the Roman Empire. There is, fortunately, a public life open to our wealthier men, in which their talents and energies may find honourable employment, and they are not, therefore, as in the days of Juvenal, driven to find a sphere for their activity in degrading pursuits. Parliament presents a field for their ambition such as neither Greece in the age of Pericles, nor Rome in that of Augustus, possessed. The Church and the Bar, science, literature, and art, engross the attentions of men who, under circumstances similar to those which surrounded the contemporaries of the satirist, might have fallen a prey to the errors and the vices which characterized his age; and I cannot help thinking that modern

civilization, in spite of its shortcomings, can fairly claim to be higher in its morality and aims than any that has preceded it.

North. The great evil attendant upon civilization, and which, indeed, would seem to be inseparable from it, is the loss, which it entails, of those heroic qualities that are found in a rude age. The sterner qualities which distinguish the latter, cannot thrive in an atmosphere of refinement. Civilization, by giving a too engrossing culture of the mental faculties, is apt to leave us, like Hamlet, crippled in our activities. Public opinion becomes too paramount for the freedom of individual judgment ; the habits of society become irksome ; the avoidance of everything that may wound our own, or the susceptibilities of others ; the shrinking from the right when it might place us in antagonism to friends—these are some of the evils which follow in its wake. It will produce more Erasmuses than Luthers, more Trimmers than Crusaders.

Tickler. And should we regret this? Is there, indeed, a comparison to be drawn between those whom you thus put into juxtaposition? Was not Erasmus, though a less resolute, a wiser man than the fiery and indomitable monk? As to Trimmers, I hold them to be the most sensible persons in the world, for they avoid the errors that are incident to all extremes, and exhibit a quality which those who pretend to despise them would do well to acquire. Nor am I aware that the wisdom of the Crusaders commands our respect.

Shepherd. Their adventures are, nevertheless, verra interesting, and offer a capital subject for "romauant and roundelay." And arena we indebted

to them for the chivalrous sentiment we entertain towards women—an element in the character of nations which is surely o' the utmost importance.

North. Politically, the Crusades were productive of great evil, inasmuch as they threw great power into the hands of the Pope and clergy, who, by lending money to the knights who took part in them, secured to their order an almost incredible extent of land. They also fostered mendicancy, and, what was a still greater evil, they stimulated a passion which is at all times more easily aroused than restrained—religious fanaticism. It cannot, however, be denied that we are, as James has said, greatly indebted to their influence for the love of honour and hatred of oppression, and for the chivalrous feeling towards women, that have since characterized European society, and the lack of which tended so powerfully to hasten the decay of ancient civilizations. Nor, on the other hand, can it be denied that their influence upon general morality was unwholesome, or that, though the most unselfish, they were, as Mr. Lecky * has said, the most disastrous wars the world has ever seen.

Shepherd. Weel, at a' events they furnished the world wi' a gran' subject for a poem, and I wunner it has never been seized upon by some writer equal to mould it into a noble yepic.

North. Epics worth reading, my dear Shepherd, are to be counted upon the fingers; and yet we must number amongst them Tasso's, which cannot be pronounced unequal to its subject. In style, in interest, and in descriptive power, it will bear comparison with the *Æneid* itself. With what pathos and beauty he

* *History of Rationalism*, part II. ch. v.

describes the loves of Olindo and Sophronia, and the scenes between Rinaldo and Armida! Perhaps you would like to try the subject, James?

Shepherd. Nay, nay, ma genie's no o' the yepic cast, but is mair suited to bits o' poems no deficient, aiblins, in poo'r o'er the feelings, but maen nae pretension to higher merit.

Tickler. Then give us one of your own songs, James, before we separate.

Shepherd. I'm ower tired to sing again, and I hae noticed Mr. North wi' his haun' afore his mooth ance or twice, as if he was yawnin'.

North. I certainly must apologize, James; but the fact is——

Shepherd. Nae, sir, ye needna apologize at this late hour, especially as Tickler has had to staun' up mair than ance to shak off his droosiness. Sae let's be gaun, for we've had a verra pleasant meetin', and I shouldna like ye to spoil it by snorin'. Sae come along, and gie me your airm, and I'se mind ye dinna stumble down the stairs.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

IV.

SCENE—*Blue Parlour.**Present.*—NORTH, TICKLER, and SHEPHERD.

Shepherd. To judge frae the way in which ye fling those manuscripts intil the box ane wad think ye hairtless and cruel, sir; but those wha are better acquainted wi' your character ken ye to be the maist considerate and kindly o' creetics. And yet isn't fearfu' to contempawte the mony howps ye hae blichted, and, aiblins, the mony hairts ye hae brocht, thrae the instremawntality o' the Balaam Box? Nevertheless there you sit—

“Like patience on a monument, smiling at grief.”

North. Appearances, my dear Shepherd, in this, as in so many other instances, are deceptive, for it not unfrequently causes me far greater pain to reject contributions than——

Shepherd. Na, na, I canna believe it, for ye are unable to realize the anguish caused to young owthers by the rejection o' their articles. I weel remember sendin'—mony years sin'—a wee bit ballant to Mawga,* and the disappointment I felt whan I received a short, but poleete nott, regrettin'——

* *Blackwood's Magazine.*

North. Never, James, did I refuse a contribution from your pen.

Shepherd. Weel, weel, you couldna gie better proof o' gude judgment. But what's that ye hae just thrown intil th' abyss?

North. A drama.

Shepherd. A drawma! And is't nae weel written?

North. I know not. But *Maga* is not a theatrical publication, and I cannot, therefore, accept dramas, however excellent.

Shepherd. Just sae; but I'll tak a luk at it gin ye've no objection, sir.

North. None whatever, James. Suppose I dub you sub-editor.

Shepherd. Sub-yeditor indeed! An' think ye that the Shepherd 'ill condescend to play second fiddle to ony man, no exceptin' yersel', Mr. North? But noo for the drawma. Here's a lo'e scene, sae I'll read it aloud, for I'm unco' fond o' them. [*Reads.*]

Philip. Dear Julia, now I may declare the love
Which I have so long cherish'd toward thee.

Julia. Then thou lov'st me, Philip?

Philip.

Canst thou doubt it?

Julia. Thou dost! O joy! then thou art really mine.

[*They embrace.*]

North. Humph!

Shepherd. Oh, man, be seelent! [*Reads.*]

Philip. Thine for ever!

Oh, how I've dwelt in fancy on the hour
When I might call thee mine, as I do now!
Oft have I sooth'd this doubting heart of mine,
With pictures of our future happiness;
How, in sweet oblivion to the world

We two should pass our lives in constant bliss ;
Thinking of nought but love, and how we might
Ourselves make worthy of such happiness.
Unconscious of all grief save that which springs
From generous pity for the lot of those
Who, unlike us, have never known the joys
Of sweet affection.

Julia. Say on, dear Philip.

Philip. 'Twere greatest effort of self-denial
To comply with thy flattering behest,
For whilst I give expression to my thoughts
I miss the music of my Julia's voice.

Julia. Oh, how sweet is flattery from thy dear lips !
Thy welcome words with transport fill my heart,
Which beats with joy, at harmony so sweet
As that which stirs the air when thou dost speak.

Philip. Speak on, mine own !

Shepherd. You may groan as aften as ye wull,
Mr. North, but that scene's no badly written, but is
weel expressed, and presents to my mind a pleasant
pictur o' the rapture o' twa hairts overflowin' wi' lo'e.
But I'll turn ower a few pages and read anither
passage,

North. Dramas nowadays are but indifferent
stuff.

Shepherd. Na, sir, I'm no to be put aff in that
way ; sae be seelent. [*Reads.*]

Julia. Ah ! good morning, Lucy. You look so well
That I must fain believe that you have slept
Unconscious of the conquests which, last night,
You made. Nay, dear, shake not that head of thine
By way of contradiction, for thou know'st
'Tis true ! But, dear, what means this pensiveness ?
Sure thou'rt not in love—though I believe it ?

Lucy. The fatigue—

Julia. Try not to deceive one who knows so well

The power to banish sleep which Love doth wield.
 Oh, how we sigh and start, and think of nought
 But some few feet of frail humanity !
 And if, perchance, his name be utter'd,
 Our eyelids droop, as if in very fear
 Our eyes reflect the colour of our cheeks.
 This foolishness doth last till we are sure
 That he we love doth think of nought but us.
 Then, then we banish sighs, and use our power
 To force the declaration from his lips,
 That we have so much long'd to hear.
 Indifference we feign, and call up pouts
 To lips which tremble with desire to kiss
 The only being we care to frown upon.
 Come, say thou lov'st, and then will I confess
 Myself in love !

Shepherd. And sae on. Noo this isna sae bad as I should hae expeckit o' an article taen frae the Balaam Box, for, thae evidently immature, it has some fine touches o' feminine character which the owther, whether o' the male or the female sax, seems to understaun verra weel. It's a puty that sic-like papers are no seleckit and published under the title o' "Crumbs frae Mawga's Table"——

[TICKLER *starts up from his reverie.*

Shepherd. Yedited by Timothy Tickler, ane o' the owthers.

Tickler. Never, James, was an article of mine rejected either by North or——

Shepherd. Then I maun admire the judgment and gude sense ye hae shown, i' never ha'in' gien way to the *cacæthes screebendee*.

North (*throwing another manuscript into the box*).
 Eh! what's that?

Shepherd. Didna ye ken, sir, that I hae mastered

the declensions, and that I can mak oot maist o' the short quotations which I meet wi' in the coorse o' ma readin' ?

North. The first Greek or Latin ode you write, James, shall appear in the magazine.

Tickler. Hem! *the* magazine!

Shepherd. Forgie him, Tickler, for wi' a' his genie—and I'll no deny him the possession o't—he is, like ither yeditors, verra vain.

Tickler. *Nihil est ab omni parte beatum.*

Shepherd. Bee-the-bee, Mr. North, I hear ye're gaun to Italy this summer. Is't true, sir?

North. Yes, if I can manage to escape from dear old Edinbro'.

Shepherd. It maun be a pleasant thing to travel thrae kintras which the auncient poets, and orators, and feelosophers hae consecrated wi' their genie, and to tread the soil o' classic Greece or Rome.

North. And to wander, James, with the spirit of Plato, through the academic grove, listening, in fancy, to the sighing of the plane trees which once adorned the garden; to recall the days when the disciples of Zeno met in the Porch, and those of Aristotle wandered in the shady paths of the Lyceum; to pass from Athens to Rome, and to recall the eloquence that still seems to be echoing through the Forum,—everywhere realizing

“ A presence that disturbs us with the joy
Of elevated thoughts; . . .
A motion and a spirit that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things.”

Tickler. Experiencing a feeling of blended joy

and sadness, whilst reflecting upon the decay of the Niobe of nations, as described by Juvenal.

Shepherd. Neist best to seein' is to read o' such places, and whilst readin' to fa' asleep, as I did the ither nicht when lookin' intil Miss Bremer's byuck about Italy and Switzerland. I was nae sooner asleep than I dreamt I stood before Mont Blanc. It was sunset, and the snae-covered mountain shot up frae the valley in three or fowre majestic waves that seemed to break in faem again' the golden shingle o' the sky, which was irrawdiated wi' the roseate hues o' the settin' sun. No words can tell the thochts or describe the feelings I experienced at that happy maement, for, like Tam Muir,

"I stood entranc'd and mute."*

But in the twinklin' o' an ee the scene was changed, and I stood upon the tap o' the Rigi. It was early morn, and dizzens o' folk were around me, watchin' for the risin' sun. The Lakes o' Lucerne and Zug were shrooded in mist, which "with its filmy drapery veiled" the mountain sides. We were surrounded by mony hunder peaks, which seemed to come nearer and nearer as th' increasin' licht revealed their forms mair distinctly, till the sun, like a globe o' fire, shot up a' at ance aboon the distant Santis, and I gazed upon a thousan' snae-clad mountain taps bathed in the effulgence o' his glorious licht.

Tickler. And no doubt saw

"Ein armer

Wildheuer, guter Herr, vom Rigiberge,
Der überm Abgrund weg das freie Gras
Abmähet von den schroffen Felsenwänden
Wohin das Vieh sich nicht getraut zu steigen."

* The Shepherd misquotes Moore. See *Rhymes on the Road*, Extract 1.

Shepherd. Gin ye're speakin' o' ocht that's worth the hearin', I wuss ye'd luk to your mainners, Mr. Tickler, and no speak i' a language which ye know ane, if not twa, o' the company dinna understaun.

North. Why, James, German is as familiar to me as your own beautiful Doric.

Shepherd. Aiblins it is; but it's unco' easy to mak pretension to a kind o' knowledge which ye ken I canna gainsay.

North. But have I not often read Goethe——

Shepherd. Getty's a' weel aneuch i' his way, though, to judge frae Carlyle's version o' *Meester*, I think him no too respectable. What is your opinion o't, Tickler?

Tickler. The morality of *Wilhelm Meister* is bad, and the book, being false in taste, is necessarily imperfect as a work of art. Its hero is a sentimental rover whom we are apt at first to despise, but whom we afterwards tolerate on account of the many brilliant things he utters. All men are perhaps, at times, and especially in youth, foolish; but it is to be hoped that few descend to kiss the knocker of their mistress' door, however infatuated they may be.

Shepherd. Haw, haw, haw! ye're waxing wutty, Tickler.

North. You remind me of Lucretius' description of the wretched lover kissing the walls that clasp his mistress.—Carlyle thinks *Wilhelm Meister* one of the finest emanations of Goethe's genius.

Tickler. And so does Schlegel; but their opinions do not alter the character of the book, which is vicious in its tendencies. Its male and female characters are alike contemptible. Mariana with her twin lovers;

Philina with her dozen wooers and customary "pledge;" the Countess who fondles the hero after a few hours' acquaintance; and Theresa who relates to a stranger the story of her mother's infamy, are the creations we are, forsooth, expected to admire.

Shepherd. Is't no strange that a writer like Getty should hae filled his byuck wi' sic-like characters?

North. It is, indeed. Still, I think Tickler is a little unjust as regards, not the morality, but the merits of the work. Carlyle deplores the tone of *Wilhelm Meister*, and does not attempt to justify it, as Lewis* does, by arguments founded upon the supposed truthfulness of the characters. Apart from its morality, the book possesses many admirable qualities. It abounds in philosophical reflections and acute criticisms—his remarks upon Hamlet being alone sufficient to redeem it from oblivion; whilst its truthful descriptions of life and clear insight into character entitle it to be regarded as the achievement of a great mind.

Tickler. The *Revue des Deux Mondes* attempted to justify the work on the ground that, as the characters are *real*, they must necessarily be artistic. Now, if this were so, *realism* would be synonymous with *art*, which it is not. The aim of true art is ennobling, but realism is not necessarily so. Philina and the Countess might be what Goethe has depicted, but the indecorous scenes in which they figure are surely antagonistic to the principles of the highest art. The true artist differs from the false, not so much in the choice of subjects, as in his mode of treating them. The crimes which form the subject of the Grecian

* *Life of Goethe*, vol. ii., bk. 6, ch. 2.

tragedies have not debased the genius of Æschylus, of Sophocles, or of Euripides. The same cannot, however, be said of Goethe's heroines. Nowhere is the purity of Milton's mind more beautifully shown than in his description of our first parents in Eden. But, as Dryden turned Eve and Miranda into courtesans, so Goethe, had he chosen Milton's subject, would, I fear, have pictured our first parent as he has Philina—burdened with a pledge.

Shepherd. Haw, haw, haw! Tickler's waxing wutty the nicht.

North. Moore has well defined the character of true art in his description of the pictures which adorned the residence of the prophet. Speaking of them, he says they were

“Not yet too warm, but touch'd with that fine art
Which paints of pleasure but the *purer* part ;
Which knows ev'n beauty when half veil'd is best.”

Goethe has, in his description of Marguerite, shown his ability to depict with fidelity without stooping to vulgarity. His Iphigenia, too, is chastely and beautifully drawn.

Shepherd. Is't ocht like the ane by Euripides ?

North. It lacks, James, many of the characteristics of the Grecian drama, though it is certainly truer to the Greek than Rotrou's *Iphigénie en Aulide*, in which Ulysses is represented as challenging Achilles to fight a duel.

Shepherd. Oh! but that's capital.

Tickler. Bowring speaks more favourably of Goethe's *Iphigenia*, for he follows in the wake of Schlegel, and pronounces it an echo of Greek song.

North. Then De Quincey was right when he declared that "a glittering metaphor is always suspicious in criticism." To my mind Goethe's *Iphigenia* is anything rather than Grecian. It resembles, indeed, the play of Euripides in name, but——

Shepherd. Arena ye ower severe upon Getty the nicht?

North. No, James, for at present I am only dealing with his critics. Now, the ancient dramas are characterized by a deep current of passionate and religious feeling, whilst the play of Goethe is cold as marble. Pray, which of the Greek tragedies is it like?

Shepherd. I canna tell. Ask Tickler.

North. Does it resemble those of Æschylus? It so, which of them? Surely not the *Agamemnon*, in which the crime of Clytemnestra and the ravings of Cassandra are so terribly portrayed; nor the *Chæphori*, which breathes with revenge, and echoes the death-cries of Ægisthus and his paramour; nor the *Eumenides*, which startles us by the execrations of the Erinnyes, and interests by the danger of Orestes; nor the *Prometheus*, heaving with the agonies of the fallen god?

Shepherd. I hae always understood that a' German writers are tinged wi' sentimentalism. Was Getty?

North. In his youthful days he was, as witness *Werther*; but poor Kotzebue eclipsed all others in this respect, and was consequently very popular in his own day.

Tickler. The lyrics with which he interspersed his dramas were, perhaps, the best of his writings.

Shepherd. And isna he read the noo?

North. On the contrary, his works supply paper to the pastry-cooks in Germany.

Shepherd. Canna ye receete to me ane o' his lyrics?

North. In the original?

Shepherd. Dinna be sarcastic, sir.

Tickler. I'll venture a translation, James, of the song with which *Feodore* commences.

“ Spring has appeared, birchens bloom,
 Fill'd is the air with perfume
 Which from violets springs ;
 Breezes from the sunny West,
 Bring the warbling feather'd guest,
 The swallow chirps in the nest,
 And the cuckoo sings.

“ With childlike soul and power
 I see in every flower
 Divinity's sure signs ;
 Where tiny worms are surging,
 Or suns their courses urging,
 There, there, towards me verging,
 Nature's Temple shines.”

Shepherd. Weel done, Tickler! [*To NORTH.*]
 That's no a bad translation?

North. Certainly not, James; for the task was far from easy. “Surging,” though, perhaps, as good a rendering of the original word as is, considering the demands of the rhyme, possible, is nevertheless a little too strong; and the alliteration in the last line but one, though effective, is not in the original.

Shepherd. It maun be very difficult to translate poetry weel.

Tickler. Very, James. It is so dependent upon rythm and shades of expression—often untranslatable—that translations are at best but echoes of the

originals. A good instance of this difficulty is to be found in Margaret's song at the spinning-wheel, in *Faust*. Here's the original :—

“ Mein Ruh ist hin,
Mein Herz ist schwer ;
Ich finde sie nimmer
Und nimmermehr.

“ Wo ich ihn nicht hab'
Ist mir das Grab ;
Die ganze Welt
Ist mir vergällt.

“ Mein armer Kopf
Ist mir verrückt,
Mein armer Sinn
Ist mir zerstückt.”

Shepherd. A'thaigh I hae no understood a single word o' what you've receeted, it seems to me as if ye were keepin' time to the motion o' the wheel.

North. That, James, is the peculiar charm of the original. Give us a translation, Tickler.

Tickler. I will give you Bowring's :—

“ My heart is sad,
My peace is o'er ;
I find it never
And nevermore.

“ When gone is he,
The grave I see ;
The world's wide all
Is turn'd to gall.

“ Alas ! my head
Is well-nigh craz'd ;
My feeble mind
Is sore amaz'd.”

Shepherd. That surely isna a guid translation, for it seems as thaigh I suldna be able to turn the wheel except by fits and starts, gin I were to sing thae verses.

North. I fear that must be partially Tickler's fault, for the translation is by no means an unsuccessful one. But however bad may be our English translations, they are at least equal to the bulk of foreign ones. Our translators certainly strive—even where they fail—to render the meaning, and, if possible, the peculiar rhythm and shades of expression to be found in the originals.

Shepherd. And sae do a' translators, ane wad think.

North. Not if we may judge from the result. Take, for instance, Ernst Ortlepp's translation of Byron's Lyrics.*

Tickler. Wretched indeed!

North. You remember that beautiful hymn in *Don Juan*—

“The isles of Greece, the isles of Greece!
 Where burning Sappho loved and sung,
 Where grew the arts of war and peace,
 Where Delos rose, and Phœbus sprung!
 Eternal summer gilds them yet,
 But all except their sun is set.”

Shepherd. Noo for the translation.

North.—

“Die Inseln, die Inseln von Griechenland,
 Wo die liebeglühende Sappho sang,

* Lord Byron's *Sämmtliche lyrische Gedichte übersetzt von Ernst Ortlepp.*

Wo Apollo's herrlicher Tempel stand,
 Wo der Held wie der Dichter die palm' errang,
 Noch bestrahlt sie des ewigen Sommers Gold,
 Doch die Sonne des Ruhms ist hinabgerollt !”

Now, to render the third and fourth lines as Ortlepp has rendered them, is to evince an incapacity for translation.

Shepherd. You forget that I dinna know German, and canna, therefore, judge o' his wark.

North. His translation, if redone into English, would read thus—

“ Where Apollo's glorious Temple stood,
 Where Hero and Poet alike gain'd the palm.”

Shepherd. It gars me a grue to hear sic havers. But maybe it's nae possible to do justice to the original ?

Tickler. It would at least be easy to improve upon Ortlepp's attempt.

Shepherd. I'se bet glasses roun' that ye canna do't better yersel', Tickler.

North. Agreed, and I'll be the arbiter.

Shepherd (aside to NORTH). Wull ye no side wi' me gin I promise to mix your glass mysel' ? [*Aloud.*] But Tickler's in a quandary. See hoo the sweat bursts frae his broo ! Dinna be afeard, man, but do your best, and order in the Glenlivet.

North. Whilst Tickler is meditating upon his task, let me give you one more example of the demerit of Ortlepp's translations. You remember those beautiful *Stanzas for Music* beginning—

“ There's not a joy the world can give like that it takes away,
 When the glow of early thought declines in feeling's dull decay ;

'Tis not on youth's smooth cheek the blush alone, which fades
so fast,
But the tender bloom of heart is gone, ere youth itself be past."

Shepherd. They are verra beautifu'.

North. Well, this is how Ortlepp translates them :—

“Ach, alle Freuden, die die Welt mag geben,
Sind kein Ersatz für ein verlornes Leben,
Und wenn die Wange sammt dem Geist erbleicht,
So hat der Jungling selbst sein Grab erreicht.”

Shepherd. It doesna seem to be in the same metre as the original, but maybe that's your faut.

North. Pardon me, James, the fault is not mine. But to enable you to judge of the translation I'll re-translate it into English.

“Ah! all the joys the world can give,
Are nothing to a life forlorn;
And when the cheeks and soul grow pale,
E'en youth has made the grave its own.”

I do not say that this hasty rendering is a good one, but it is sufficiently correct to enable you to judge of Ortlepp's translation.

Shepherd. Then I howp nae Mr. Orklip 'ill do me the honour o' translatin' the *Queen's Wake* into German.

North. How much superior is Stadelmann's translation of the same poem!*

“Nicht beut so reiche Freude je die Welt uns, als sie nimmt,
Wenn in ein dumpf Gefühl dereinst die Jugendgluth verglimmt;
'S ist nicht der Wangen Blüthe nur, die mit den Jahren bleicht:
Des Herzens zarte Blume welkt, eh' Jugend selbst entweicht.”

* Lord Byron's *Lyrische Gedichte*.

Shepherd. Come, Mr. Tickler, arena ye ready yet?

Tickler. Here it is.

Shepherd. Hand it ower to Mr. North to read.

NORTH *reads.*

“Ihr Inseln in dem griech’schen Meere,
 Wo Sappho glühnde Liebe sang,
 Wo jeder Kunst ward Ruhm und Ehre,
 Wo Phöbus sich zum Himmel schwang,—
 Ein ewiger Sommer schmückt euch, doch
 Was blieb euch sonst von Allem noch?

Shepherd. Wha’s wan?

North. The Shepherd!

Shepherd. Hurraw! hurraw! Ring the bell,
 Tickler, and while Awmrose is fetchin’ the whusky
 I’ll sing ye a bit o’ a sang.

[*The order for whisky is given.*]

SHEPHERD *sings.*

“Tell me where my Mary’s gane, dinna hesitate, I pray,
 For I loe her better than mysel’ and am sad when she’s away.
 Her een are blue and bonny, and her looks sae fu’ o’ glee,
 That to see her and to loe her was aye just ane to me.

I met her in the forest when the blue-bells bloom’d and bent,
 As the simmer breeze swept o’er them as if in merriment
 At meeting wi’ such bonny things amang the brackens wild;
 And the blue-bells waw’d sae gently—it seem’d as if they smil’d.

I was young and bashfu’ then, and she was timorous too,
 Sae I pass’d my ain sweet Mary wi’ a blush upon my broo;
 But thaigh my een were douncast, I’d seen upon her face
 The glow that spake her modest, thaigh her form was fu’ o’ grace.

We met again ere many days—our meetings frequent grew ;
 I wasna lang in finding out her heart was guid and true ;
 And ane ev'ning as the sun went down, I told the old, old tale,
 As the piping of the mavis re-echo'd thrae the vale.

Then tell me where my Mary's gane ; it canna be she's dead,
 For she smil'd upon me at the door and kiss'd me as she said :
 " Dinna be late at hame the nicht, for I am unco' sad
 Till nicht brings hame my guid man—'tis his presence maks
 me' glad."

While thus he spoke a' eyes grew dim, and still'd was every
 tongue,
 For the lov'd partner o' his life had gan to her last home.
 He read the pressure o' the hand, the tear upon the cheek,
 And ere that selfsame year had pass'd he join'd her in her
 sleep.

Tickler. As touching as anything in Burns !

North. God bless you, James !

(*Enter AMBROSE with toddy.*)

Shepherd. Oh, Awmrose ! but ye're just able to
 mix a draucht worthy o' Nestor and Patroclus. Noo,
 Mr. North, tak haud o' a tummler. Are ye ready,
 Tickler ? Then tak time frae me and let it be a
 caulker. Ance ! twice ! thrice !

[*A short silence intervenes, during which the
 glasses are drained.*]

It wad be weel-nigh impossible to deceede which
 o' us was first and which last, sae simultawneous were
 our movements. And noo, let us form Homeric
 groups. What shall the first be ?

Tickler. Ajax protecting Teucer from the

wrath of Hector. Down on your marrow-bones, James!

[*The SHEPHERD assumes the required position.*

TICKLER represents Hector rushing upon the fallen Teucer, whilst NORTH shields him with his crutch. After a short time the SHEPHERD rises, and the group dissolves.

Shepherd. Oh, sirs! but that was a grand group. Tickler looked mair terrible than I could hae believed possible; and as to Mr. North, he looked like heroism personified.

North. How came you to see this, James?

Shepherd. Weel, sir, to confess the truth, I couldna help prein' oot o' the corner. o' ma ee. And noo ye twa shall represent the combat between Hector and Achilles. Let Mr. North be Hector this time.

[*NORTH raises his crutch aloft as if in the act of hurling it at TICKLER, who stands on the defensive.*

Shepherd. Dinna stir, for ye baith luk like Teetans. Oh, Mr. North! but there's a fine frenzy in your rollin' ee, while Tickler stands like Jove himself. That'll do.

[*The group dissolves.*

North. It is dry work, my dear Shepherd.

Shepherd. Tak a pree o' the whusky frae the jug, and then you shall represent Minerva pourin' nectar intil Achilles, wham I'll personify.

Tickler. We'll first finish the toddy, James.

Shepherd. Then will I no be Achilles, for it wad be dounricht cruelty to haud an empty pitcher to ma mooth. I tak it to be an indubitable proposition, that in theatrical representations the mair ane can assim-

late the circumstances o' the actors to those o' the *dramatis personæ* an' the mair perfect will be the result; and if, therefore, ye wad enjoy the sicht o' Achilles as he nae dout appeared before Minerva, it is necessary to observe the proposition I hae laid down. Thus, whusky is essential, and the stranger ye make it and the nearer it will approach in taste to the beverage offered by the goddess, and, of course, the mair perfect will be my actin'. And when you see me revived by the nectar, ma een fired wi' the chivalry and mirrowrin' the impetuosity and ardour o' Achilles, then will ye say o' me what the sergeant * said o' Kemble, that I ennoble the *Noctes* by bending on you looks "beaming with the aristocracy of nature."

North. But Lytton, in *The New Timon*, says—

"The less men feel the better they can feign—
To act a Romeo, needs it a Romeo's pain?"

Tickler. Let James put his theory into practice by representing a martyr. We shall thus preserve the whisky and attain the required assimilation.

Shepherd. Oh, Tickler! but ye are cruel the night! An' do you think that ony actor could do justice to sic a subjeck? Act a martyr! That's impossible. It's easier to pictur to ane's mind such scenes as Rome has often witnessed—the death o' martyrs—than to teepify them. I fancy I see, even noo, the crood hastenin' toward the great square, where thoosands o' a' ages and o' baith saxes are congregatin'. Curiosity is written upon every face, and the surging populace show their interest in th' approaching event by short, anxious questions. A'

* *Talfourd.*

at ance a lang, deep murmur bursts frae the multitude as the martyr to intolerance is led to the pile o' faggots. But the fire o' the martyr spirit beams in his ee as he luks down upo' the spectators, and his breast heaves wi' haughty contempp o' his persecutors. The cross is gien him to kiss, but he is inexorable; and when he refuses the heepocreetical pressure o' his lips, an angry yell bursts frae the crood, and the cry o' heretic mingles wi' the savage din. And noo the faggots are lit, the smoke curls around the martyr; the spectators listen wi' strained ears to catch, e'en yet, the words o' retraction, and stare wi' incredulous een at the pile. But no a murmur, no a single expression o' submission or regret, is heard, and so dees, as hunders hae done, the sacrifice to truth. O Rome! Rome! hoo mony glorious anes' hae perished upon the scaffolds o' thy hate; hoo often has the shadow o' persecution rested upon thy seven hills!

North.—

“God!—that the worm whom Thou hast made
Should thus his brother worm invade!
Count deeds like these good service done,
And deem Thine eye looks smiling on!!”

Shepherd. Weel, sir, but it's astonishin' what'n a number o' quotations ye hae by hairt, and hoo aptly ye can bring them in at the richt maement. Whatever we may be discussin', be it religion, leeterature, or mainners, you are aye ready to conclude it wi' a few lines sae apposite that ane's amaist led to believe them you're ain composition—the cooruscactions o' your genie, and no the thochts o' ithers.

Whan ane can thus, "in the nick of time," as Shakspeer says——

Tickler. Eh, James ?

Shepherd. What's the maitter, Mr. Tickler ?

Tickler. Where is that quotation to be met with, pray ?

Shepherd. Weel, I canna be expeckit to be able to gie the play and the ack and the scene in which it occurs, nor am I bun' to swear that Shakspeer is the owther o't; but you understaun that whan a body's undeceeded as to the owthership o' ony passage or bit apothegm, it's safest to gie him, rather than anither, the credit o' its production. By this coorse twa ends are gained—th' appearance o' bein' well read, and the credit o' honesty, whilst at the same time you avoid being ca'd a copiawtor.

North. True, James ; and many of our best writers might have saved themselves from the charge of plagiarism had they acted upon your precept.

Shepherd. Ye dinna mean that ony o' our best writers hae been guilty o' th' offence ?

North. Dryden has plagiarized from Shakespeare, Pope from Dryden, Gray from Dante, and Goldsmith from Tasso.

Shepherd. It's amaist incredible, but maybe ye're able to gie instances ?

North. I will give the few I remember. In *Absalom and Achitophel* Dryden says—

“Heaven has to all allotted, soon or late,
Some lucky revolution of their fate ;
Whose motions, if we watch and guide with skill,
(For human good depends on human will,)
Our future rolls as from a smooth descent,
And from the first impression takes the bent :

But if unseized, she glides away like wind,
And leaves repenting folly far behind."

Now, the same thought is expressed by Shakespeare in the well-known lines—

"There is a tide in the affairs of men
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune ;
Omitted, all the voyage of their life
Is bound in shallows and in miseries."

Shepherd. There's nae denyin' their similarity.

Tickler. Bailey has the same thought in *Festus*—

"There are points from which we can command our life ;
When the soul sweeps the future like a glass."

Shepherd. Noo for Pop !

North. Pope's lines—

"Vice is a monster of so frightful mien,
As, to be hated, needs but to be seen,"

are, as has been pointed out, a gross instance of plagiarism from *The Hind and the Panther*:—

"For truth has such a face and such a mien,
As to be loved needs only to be seen."

Shepherd. Pop maun blush up to his een after that.

North. As to Gray, he stole the opening line of his *Elegy* from Dante.

Tickler. Longfellow is also guilty, for his line

"Art is long and time is fleeting "

is a translation of Faust's words—

"Ach Gott ! die Kunst ist lang
Und Kurz is unser Leben."

North. Ah! but that thought is at least as old as Hippocrates.

Shepherd. There, Mr. Tickler, ye maun tak care, when neist you charge onybody wi' plagiarism, no to gie the stown property to the wrang owner. But what about Goldsmith, sir?

North. His lines—

“Man wants but little here below,
Nor wants that little long,”

are the same as Tasso's :—

“Chè poco è il desiderio, e poco è il nostro
Bisogno, onde la vita si conservi.”

Tickler. After all, it is difficult to define where plagiarism begins, for a writer may, whilst borrowing an idea from another, make it truly his own. It can scarcely be said that Scott,* and Macaulay,† and Bulwer,‡ plagiarized because they were indebted to Clytemnestra's magnificent description of the fires which gleamed from Ida to Arachne's height, on the fall of Troy. But of how few poets can it be truly affirmed, what Denham affirmed of Cowley—

“To him no author was unknown,
Yet, what he writ was all his own.”

Shepherd. Gin ye gae on much langer I shallna be surpressed to hear ye attemp to pruve me guilty mysel'.

Tickler. That is easily done.

* See his *Lay*, Canto 3.

* In the *Armada*.

‡ See his description of the Cymrian fire-beacons in *King Arthur*, Book 5.

Shepherd. Noo, Mr. Tickler, ye hae lost ae jug o' whusky already, sae dinna risk anither by statin what ye canna substantiate.

Tickler. Ah! but the translation was Schäffer's, and not mine.—But I repeat, James, that nothing is easier than to convict you of plagiarism.

Shepherd. It's a lee, Tickler—a confoonded lee—and I defy you to quote ae single line frae ony o' ma sangs, or frae the *Queen's Wake*, in proof o' the charge.

Tickler. Tut, tut, James!

Shepherd. Ye may tut, tut, as ye please, Mr. Timothy Tickler, but I dawr you to the proof. (*To NORTH.*) He canna pruv't, sir, can he?

North. I cannot say, my dear Shepherd; but I am certainly surprised to hear Tickler make the accusation, for I do not remember an instance of plagiarism on your part.

Shepherd. Nor does he.

Tickler. Are you the author, Mr. Hogg, of a song entitled *Row on, Row on?*

Shepherd. I'm nae likely to deny it.

Tickler. Then I charge you with having, in the third verse of that song, been guilty of a most bare-faced plagiarism.

Shepherd. Quote it.

Tickler. It begins thus—

“For whether he's alive or dead.”

North.—

“I'll grind his bones to make me bread.”

Tickler. Just so. Is it not, then, clear that James has borrowed from a poem familiar to every child?

Shepherd. Haw, haw, haw! Gie's your haun, Tickler, for ye're uncommonly amusin' the nicht. I canna deny that there's a similarity, no to sae eedentity, between the twa. But, after a', I'm nae sae muckle surprised at the frequency o' plagiarism, for it seems natural that the same thochts should occur to men gifted wi' minds o' similar character. Nor do I admit the guilt o' an owther wha happens to express an idea which may be fun' in a previous writer, unless, indeed, he appropriates it wi' malice aforethocht.

North. But we are obliged to assume, as a check upon plagiarism, an acquaintance on the part of every writer with the works of all his predecessors.

Shepherd. That's assumption wi' a vengeance, and nae mistak!

Tickler. It is no greater a presumption than is made in the case of our laws, the maxim being *Ignoratio leges non excusat*.

North. It cannot be maintained, James, that one has a right to reiterate as his own the thoughts of previous authors. We are, therefore, bound to assume in every case such an acquaintance with literature as will enable the writer to avoid the fault of which we are speaking. If, for instance, we were to find in the poems of Alexander Smith, or Bailey, these lines—

“Above the light of that glittering eye
The gem-covered crown looks dim;
Those cheeks outvie, with their roseate dye,
The morning's glow on a cloudy sky,*

* The original runs thus:—

“Coronal gems of every dye,
Look dim above yon beaming eye;
Yon cheeks outvie the dawning's glow,
Red-shadow'd on a wreath of snow.”

you would very properly charge them with plagiarizing the *Queen's Wake*.

Shepherd. Nae dout.

Tickler. Although they might never have read it.

Shepherd. There's nae occasion for sic a supposition. But dinna ye hear the clatter o' glasses upon the landing?

[*Enter AMBROSE and TAPPYTOORIE with supper.* It's strange what'n a reflux o' ideas o' the maist agreeable kind is experienced by human beings—gin they're no sumphs—at the approach o' a repast which they know will be worthy of a' the attention that can be devoted to it. Glimpses o' truth, insights into human feeling, flashes o' feelosophy, and no seldom wafts o' poetic inspiration, are often experienced while the ee rests, half dreamily, upon the preparations for a feast. And when, wi' a hairt owerflowin' wi' gratitude for a' blessings, and eyes beaming wi' pleasure, we sit doun to taste and enjoy the bounties o' an All-wise Providence, and the triumphs o' art, we are surely then, if ever, prepared for the kindly sally, and—

North. Supper, James! Draw up, Tickler.

Shepherd. Rax ower the eisters, sir.

Tickler. Try a sardine or a radish first.

Shepherd. Be quick wi' the eisters, man, or there'll be nane left gin Mr. North dusna slacken his speed. But what's that ye hae near you, Mr. North?

North. A favourite dish of mine—*Sole normande*.

Shepherd. The deil tak a' your French gimcracks! Gie me eisters like these, for they're maist excellent—no too big nor too sma', but young, plump, and sappy. There's just as muckle difference between an eister

that maun be carved before bein' swallowed, and a prime native, as there is between a fat cook and a dainty milliner. The ane is bulky and repulsive, whiles the ither is prim and captivatin': And this leads me to think that life micht no inaptly be likened to an eister——

Tickler. Too late, James ; for does not Pistol exclaim, "The world's mine oyster" ?

Shepherd. Confound Pistol !

North. James, try this.

Shepherd. Weel, sir, I'll tak a sma' piece to please you, thaigh I dinna like eatin' what I canna mak oot.

Tickler. Try a glass of the Lafitte with it, James.

Shepherd. I'm in na humour for cholera morbus, Tickler. Awmrose, ma man—yill !

Tickler. Your taste requires cultivating, James.

Shepherd. Tastes are national as weel's natural, Mr. Tickler, and claret hasna become acclimateezed to Scotland yet.

North. It is making its way, nevertheless. It is true that but few of us appreciate it at first, but many soon acquire a preference for it. Besides, we should not forget that, as the circle of our tastes becomes larger, the more enlarged becomes our capacity for enjoyment. It is the same with the palate as the intellect—the more varied its possessions and the greater the pleasure it yields. It is, therefore, to be regretted that the culinary art is so little cultivated in our country. If a traveller alights at any respectable hotel in many of our larger towns, he must be content with the usual roast or boiled for dinner, whereas in France, Germany, or Switzerland an agreeable variety may always be obtained.

Shepherd. Gae on, sir, for this *Poultitt-bullee** is maist delicious.

Tickler. Variety is the daughter of Excellence; for, as the poet hath it—

“ The feast’s naught,
Where our huge plate predominates.”

Shepherd. Nane but a toun poet wad hae said that, for gin he’d roamed ower the hills o’ Ettrick when they were covered wi’ hoary frost, and felt the heather crackle as his feet pressed upon it, his appetite wad hae become sufficiently keen to make his mouth water at the sight o’ a haggis, or e’en o’ a plate o’ cauld mutton.

Tickler. Work, said Horace, is the best sauce.

Shepherd. Sae ane might judge frae the eagerness wi’ which you devoor the breist o’ that fowl. As to mysel’, I’m amaist at a loss to choose between the turkey and the dyucks.

Tickler. The man who hesitates is lost, so here goes.

[*With one plunge* TICKLER *plants himself before the ducks.*]

Shepherd. Noo, I ca’ that refeened cruelty. I had been admirin’ the beauty o’ thae breists for some maements, and just whan I had made up my mind to a quiet flirtation wi’ ane o’ them, in rushes Tickler and secures the prize.

North. In feasting, as in war, the man who allows the native hue of resolution to be sickled o’er with the pale cast of thought comes off a loser.

Shepherd. It may be sae; but aften when ma

* *Poulet bouilli.*

resolution is formed I canna act ; and what Coleridge said o' Hawmlet applies in such maements to me, for I seem to loose the poo'r o' action in the intensity o' resolve. Howsomever, I'll just wheel roun' to the turkey.

North. See how Timothy hangs upon that duck, as if

“ — increase of appetite had grown
By what it fed on.”

Shepherd. Let folks say what they wull, na sensible being 'ill deny that cyuckin' is ane o' the fine airts.

North. Have not Bacon and Stuart affirmed the fact? Depend upon it, Landor was right when he declared that a good cook is the peculiar gift of the gods.

Tickler. You forget that Plato calls cookery the counterfeit of medicine, and charges it with pretending to know what food is *good* for the body, while it really knows only what food is *agreeable*.

North. Well, Plato is at least equally forgetful, for in the *Protagoras* he identifies the pleasurable and the good.

Shepherd. Ane nicht owerlook much that is reprehensible in young leddies, gin they knew how to cyuck. But whan I hear them talk a' mainner o' nonsense, pretendin', aiblins, to hae read and admired ma poems when I ken a' the while that they prefer the attentions o' ony young sodger, nae maitter hoo sumphish he may be, to ocht else in the hale warld, I canna weel help gien utterance at times to ma no verra complimentary opinion o' the sax. And noo, Mr. Tickler, I'se trouble you for a piece o' dyuck.

You ken which are my favourite bits. But, as I was gaun to remark, the consate o' some lasses is just astonishin'.

North. The failin' is not confined to the gentler sex, James.

Shepherd. I didna say it was. Noo, I was at a pairty yestreen, and ane o' the lassies was askit to sing, which she did, after feignin' a luk o' the maist abject distress at bein' sae unexpectedly, as she said, ca'd on, thaigh it turned oot she had brocht her music wi' her. Oh, sir! ye micht hae knocked me doun wi' a feather when she trilled ane o' ma ain ballants, for she skrieched in a maist fearfu' mainner. I rushed frae the house, and never stapped till I reached Awmrose's. Is't nae gospel truth, Awmrose?

Ambrose. It is certainly true that you arrived out of breath, sir.

North. You are severe, James.

Shepherd. And hadna I occasion?

North. Perhaps. But is it right to lay all the blame upon the daughters? Ought we not to appor-tion some of it to the parents?

Shepherd. Maybe, and no a little.

North. And might we not apply to ourselves the rebuke addressed by Æsop to the Samian philosopher—that we should appreciate woman according to the vigour of her mind, and not the appearance of her body?

Shepherd. Isna that, sir, a reflection upon the personal attractions o' Mrs. Gentle?

North. Really, James——

Shepherd. There's nae wonner leeterary men hae sae aften been unhappy in their domestic relations.

North. But this is certainly not attributable to the theory propounded by Moore, in his *Life of Byron*, and which you so ably refuted.* A better explanation is given by Ponsard, in his amusing comedy *Une Ode d'Horace*:—

“ Ils ont tant dépensé de feux pour les déesses,
Qu'ils n'en ont plus du tout pour de simples maîtresses,
Et, tant d'amour en vers épuisant leur vigueur,
L'imagination a ruiné le cœur.”

Shepherd. I'm nae sure that I catch the meaning o' your quotation ; but it seems to me that such unhappiness arises frae mistaken choice, for there are thousands o' women fitted by the nobleness o' their hearts, the cultivation o' their minds, and the refinement o' their tastes, to share the lot o' the greatest genie that ever lived.

Tickler. Then you agree with Boileau, who says—

“ — pour être heureux sous ce joug salutaire,
Tout depend, en un mot, du bon choix qu'on sait faire.”

North. It was the same with the ancient as it has been with so many modern authors. Xanthus' wife was a regular vixen, and both Xanthippe and Terentia were Tartars.

Shepherd. Puir things! But hadna Socrates twa wives?

North. Cicero had ; and it is to be hoped Socrates availed himself of the Athenian law, and that the virtues and placidity of Myrto compensated for the violence of Xanthippe. It is doubtful, however.

* *Noctes Ambrosianæ*, vol. iii. p. 105.

Shepherd. I should hae gien Socrates an' th' ither auncients credit for mair judgment.

North. But why do you think he married her?

Shepherd. What'n a question!

North. To enable him, as he says, by daily intercourse with the most passionate of women, to bear the humours of the rest of the world with patience.

Shepherd. Haw, haw, haw! what'n a gowk!

Tickler. There!

North. Simple and expressive, eh, James?

Shepherd. Like a' he says. I had amaist forgotten him a'thegither, wi' his keepin' sic perfect seelence. And noo I'll permit ye twa to converse upon ony subject that's mutually agreeable, provided ye'll no talk to me for the neist hoor. Sae here gaes!

[Silence reigns for half an hour, only interrupted by the entrance and exit of the Ambrosial brethren.]

Shepherd. Eh!

North. Hem!

Shepherd. Before we part for the nicht, gie us ane o' your pleasant songs, Mr. North.

North. Unfortunately, I am suffering from a cold.

Tickler.—

“ Ah, how unlike
The early utterance of the godlike Chris ! ”

Shepherd. He maun become mortal like ither men, and gie up his privilege o' censurin' the weaknesses o' humankind.

North (indignantly). Never, never, never!

Shepherd. Ay, ay ; he's lost a' originality the night, and canna do ocht but repeat ither men's sayings. For gudeness sake, sir, leave Chatham * alane and gie us a sang.

Tickler. The song—the song !

NORTH *sings.*

“The land in which I love to dwell,
And roam at morn and e'en ;
That is the land with hill and fell
And lovely Lochs between.”

Ambrose (entering hurriedly). Mr. North ! Mr. North !

North. What on earth is the matter, Ambrose ? Who's killed ?

Ambrose. No one, sir.

North. Then why the de——

Ambrose. Mrs. Gentile has sent a message requesting your immediate return home.

North (smiling blandly). Excuse me, gentlemen, but such sweet behests must be obeyed.

Shepherd. Oh, my dear, gude Mr. North, for my sake dinna think o' bein' married, or our *Noctes* wull never be safe frae interruption. But gin ye maun gang awa, gie's your haun an' I'll direck baith you and Tickler doun the staps. Sae come alang, and be carefu' no to fa' over the mat.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

* “If I were an American, as I am an Englishman, while a foreign troop was landed in my country, I never would lay down my arms—never, never, never !” See Chatham's *Speeches*.

V.

SCENE—*The Snuggery. Time—Nine o'clock.*

NORTH, SHEPHERD, TICKLER.

Shepherd. What a nicht, to be sure! Rain, wind, and lichtnin', thaigh a' separate, like thocht and feeling, are like them sae inextricably commingled as to render it difficult, if no impossible, to mak oot which o' them is maist to blame for the storm.

Tickler. Like the three witches in *Macbeth*, we have met

“In thunder, lightning, and in rain.”

Shepherd. Ay; but the hurly-burly's nae yet dune, for the rain patters doun sae persistently as amaist to droun the yowlin' o' the thunner, while the lichtnin' serves to mak mair desolate the surroundin' gloom.

North. What a pleasing contrast the Snuggery presents!

Shepherd. Ye may weel say that. I wadna be in the forest the noo for a little. Gin ye wish to see the awfu' and shooblime in natur', ye should gae intil the forest in a storm like this. Added to the rain, and the thunner and lichtnin', are the gloom and solitari-ness o' the giants that bend their creakin' airms under the fierce touch o' th' tempestuous elements which

whistle and moan, and crack, as thaigh Heaven's artillery were drivin' Satan and a' his army into th' unfathomable abyss. On siccan a nicht the lion wad slink wi' bated breath and droopin' tail intil his cave, while the puir timorous beasties wad huddle thegither drookit and scared, no e'en dawrin' to open their een to tak a furtive glance at each other. Such a night it maun hae been when the heroic Teetan was swept into th' abyss, or when Lear vented his rage upon the heath.

Tickler. And on such a night the three Wizards of the North meet in the Snuggery. Take another sip, James.

Shepherd. Weel, just a thimmlefu', Tickler. I'm beginnin' to think that you're no unlike Dr. Patrick Cumming.

Tickler. And pray who may he be, James?

Shepherd. Why, he's a parson mentioned in Dr. Carlyle's Autobiography, where he's described as being possessed o' baith learnin' and sagacity, and a very agreeable conversation, wi' a constitution able to bear the conviviality o' the times.

North. Tickler would, though, be defeated in a contest with a last century toper.

Shepherd. Do ye think sae?

North. No, James; I'm sure.

Shepherd. That's just it. Whenever a man is sure—sae sure, indeed, as to mak him impatient till listen to ony suggestion o' his bein' mistaen—ye may tak a Bible oath that he has never thocht muckle about the maitter; for while reflection is slow in arrivin' at conclusions, empty ignorance is prolific o' certitude.

Tickler. Philosophy!

Shepherd. It is ainly when conviction has dawned upon thocht, that the gates o' truth are unbarred, and the fu' glory o' reason breaks in upon us like the roseate hues o' the mornin'.

North. Poetry!

Shepherd. And yet reason alane canna perfect man. It is ainly when, whilst richtly exercisin' and developin' it, he recognizes the fact that there are truths which lie aboon and beyond it, but which are made possible to him by faith, that man stands forth in a' the grand perfection of his mental and moral faculties.

Tickler. Religion!

Shepherd. Dout is the child o' reason, and the parent o' inquiry, but faith is the twin sister o' truth—"at once its lustre and its shade;"* and, like the queen o' nicht, irrawdiates and maks beautifu' what wad otherwise be the dark and fearsome borderland o' speculation.

North. Philosophy! poetry! religion!

Shepherd. Sae it is that man attains perfection in the degree in which these three meet and are harmoneezed, and no whan they are tryin' to jostle each ither out o' the way. Reason, wi' its marvellous powers o' concatenation; imagination, soarin' aloft into th' illimitable and mysterious realms which reason, wi' its falterin' steps, can never reach; and

* "The moon pull'd off her veil of light
That hides her face by day from sight.
(Mysterious veil, of brightness made,
That's both her lustre and her shade)."

Hudibras.

feeling, which enlarges the boundaries o' human amenities and sympathies, and gilds the peaks where reason and imagination sit enthroned, with the glory as of the settin' sun.

North. Ah, James ! but does it not too frequently happen that reason conquers both feeling and imagination? When years creep apace do we not look with a mournful retrospect upon the happy, happy days of youth and early manhood ; when, strong in hope, generous in ambition, ardent in sympathy, we regarded with impatient disdain the coldness and the selfishness which age exhibited? You remember that beautiful and touching verse of Wordsworth—

“ There was a time when meadow, grove, and stream,
The earth, and every common sight,
To me did seem
Apparell'd in celestial light,
The glory and the freshness of a dream.
It is not now as it has been of yore ;
Turn wheresoe'er I may,
By night or day,
The things which I have seen I now can see no more ! ”

Shepherd. Weel, sir, dinna let us repine at the inevitable. And, after a', each stage o' life—like each season—has its ain peculiar charms, and even auld age is aften beautifu' as youth, and much mair sae than manhood. Aften hae I watched the advent o' the morn, and thrilled wi' delight as I hae seen the king o' day paint wi' glorious hues the margent o' the hills. But I hae also seen him in his decline irrawdiate the sky wi' e'en brichter tints. And sae our lives may increase in beauty as strength decays, and sae far frae repinin', we may learn frae religion to welcome

advancin' years, and to look forrard wi' resignation, if no wi' cheerfulness, to the time when we maun shuffle aff this mortal coil to assume the garb o' th' immortals.

North. One of the saddest traits in the character of the ancient Greeks was their treatment of old age, which they regarded as a great misfortune. They lacked that reverence for it which distinguishes Christian nations. We find expression of this feeling in the writings not only of Homer, but of the lyric poets, and even in those of the Attic age.

Shepherd. I'm verra sorry to hear that, sir, for I have aye had a guid opinion of th' auncient Greeks.

North. Still the feeling was, perhaps, inevitable, considering the character of Greek life and the prominence given to physical strength and beauty. To some extent this defect was, no doubt, remedied after the close of the Peloponnesian war, and Sparta had long stood out in bright contrast to Athens, for there the respect for age was not only inculcated, but practically observed.

Shepherd. I'm glad to hear't, for it is sad to think that auld age shouldna in a' ages hae commanded respect.

Tickler. How differently does old Montaigne regard the advent of old age! I know of no writer who could so truthfully exclaim, *Mors janua vitæ.*

Shepherd. Then ye hae seen the pictur, Tickler? Isna it grand? The puir knight wha's fought the gude fecht stands pale and ghastly at the portals o' anither and a brichter warld—

“Where the wicked cease frae troubling, and the weary are at rest.”

Tickler. The picture is a very touching one, bringing home to us, as it does, the great struggle in which all men must engage, and come off either the vanquished or the vanquisher—the war between good and evil.

North. It is a noble subject, and Sir Noel has treated it nobly. It is one which has furnished a theme for the highest flights of genius—one which has often married wisdom to immortal verse.

Shepherd. No seldom, indeed; and I rejoice to think, sir, that you have yoursel' penned many passages in which the glory o' religion, and the beauty o' virtue, are painted wi' poetic truth and Christian philosophy.

North. You are too kind, my dear Shepherd.

Shepherd. Nae, sir, I pay nae compliments. Wad that I could say the same o' a' writers. But little as I ken o' the warks o' those who tread the devious paths o' philosophy, I hae read at least sufficient to become aware how dangerous a weapon the creetical faculty may become in the hands of those wha are devoid o' reverence for the grandest o' revealed truths. No ainly is the possibility of miracles and the efficacy o' prayer denied, and the earth declared to be a self-created and self-existent body, but man himsel' becomes, in their view, a mere puppit o' circumstance, a creature devoid o' wull—a rudderless bark buffeted by the waves, and destined to be stranded upon an unknown shore.

North. Very true, James, and by none is the doctrine of free-will denied more stoutly than by Mr. Herbert Spencer and Professor Bain—both men of brilliant intellectual powers and of philosophic in-

sight and culture. Professor Draper, however, allows that free-will co-exists with fate, uncertainty, and destiny.*

Tickler. Are you not mistaken as regards Mr. Spencer? My impression is that he admits that every one is at liberty to do what he desires to do.

North. So he does, but he denies that man is at liberty to desire or not to desire, and herein lies the difference.

Tickler. That is Locke's † theory.

North. It is not only Locke's, but Stuart Mill's, ‡ and is, indeed, that of the whole school of experimental psychologists. Mr. Spencer's theory is that all actions are determined by the psychical connections which experience has generated either in the life of the individual, or in that general antecedent life of which the accumulated results are organized in his constitution. || This is the corollary of his theory that, "other things equal, the cohesion of psychical states is proportionate to the frequency with which they have followed one another in experience."

Tickler. In other words, that men's actions are the necessary result of their individual experience, or of the tendencies which they inherit?

North. Exactly. Of course the theory is incapable of proof, inasmuch as, assuming his premises to be true, it is nevertheless impossible to have so correct an insight into the psychical states of others, as to foretell what their actions under any given circumstance will be.

* *Hist. of Intellectual Development of Europe*, vol. i. p. 21.

† *Essay on the Human Understanding*, Bk. 2, ch. 21.

‡ *Examination of Hamilton's Philosophy*, p. 504.

|| *Principles of Psychology*, p. 500, Second Edition.

Shepherd. But surely we have sufficient knowledge o' oursel's to be able to say what, under certain circumstances, we should do?

North. There is force in that remark. It seems to me, however, that Mr. Spencer's theory is scarcely compatible with the facts of our individual experience. What, I ask, determined the modes of experience in the earliest stages of psychical life? Admitting, for the moment, that the lowest form of psychical life—reflex action—is a product of what he terms the adjustment of inner tendencies to outer persistencies, I fail to see that his theory covers the whole ground; for what caused the lowest forms of psychical life to follow one course of action in preference to another, when, for the first time, two alternative courses became presented to it?

Shepherd. Ye maun answer that question yoursel', sir, for I canna.

North. And how is it that although, according to Mr. Spencer, the complex and manifold experiences which we inherit with our organisms have sprung from the simplest form of reflex action—the sequence of a single contraction upon a single irritation—there are *antagonistic* compound reflex actions? To deduce will from the fact that after the reception of one of the more complex impressions the appropriate motor changes become nascent, but are prevented from passing into immediate action by the antagonism of certain other nascent motor changes appropriate to some nearly allied impression, is to assume the existence of these antagonistic nascent motor changes without accounting for them. And if, as he argues, “each set of nascent motor changes arising in the course of this

conflict, is a weak revival of the state of consciousness which accompanies such motor changes, when actually performed—is a representation of such motor changes as were before executed under like circumstances,”* why should any such conflict arise? That such conflicts do occur is indubitable, otherwise there could arise no opportunity for the exercise of volition; but surely, if the victorious motor changes are, as he holds, those which have most frequently been repeated in experience, no such conflict should or could arise, for the more persistent states should secure an easy victory.

Shepherd. The weaker ones never, in fact, showin’ fecht.

North. The strangest part of the theory is, that at the stage when reason steps in, this antagonism arises, although Mr. Spencer’s explanation of reason is that it has been gradually evolved from the automatic actions of the lowest manifestations of psychical life. Nor does he adequately explain how it is that the more compound reflex actions should be antagonistic whilst no such antagonism exists in the simple reflex actions from which they are evolved. If the law of intelligence be, as he supposes, “that the strengths of the inner cohesions between psychical states must be proportionate to the persistencies of the outer relations symbolized,”† and if the development of intelligence in conformity with this law be “secured by the one simple principle that experience of the outer relations produces the inner cohesions, and makes the inner cohesions strong in proportion as the outer relations are persistent,”‡ how is it that

* Vol. i. p. 496.

† *Ibid.* p. 439.

‡ *Ibid.* p. 440.

these outer relations are antagonistic? But if they are antagonistic, surely one of them must have been more persistent than the other; and if so, whence comes the confusion and hesitation which give rise to volition?

Shepherd. Ye're wieldin' the crutch, though I houp no at a phantom o' your ain conjurin'.

Tickler. How would he account for the fact that a person who, having resolved upon a course of conduct, alters his intentions at the bare request of another? Or suppose, for instance, that a person who has for years taken coffee to breakfast, is asked some morning to take cocoa, and he complies, although he may have declined to do so on a similar occasion and under similar circumstances. How would Mr. Spencer explain this diversity of action?

North. He would probably urge that the phenomena of the environment differed in some relation which we were, perhaps, unable to indicate.

Tickler. Then it is, as you said, impossible to test the theory. But I should certainly have taken it for granted that the same individual may, as Mr. Mansel* has said, act differently at different times, but under identically the same circumstances.

North. You remember that Reid said that acts are often done without any motive—a statement which Sir William Hamilton met by asking if it were possible to conceive any act of which there was not a sufficient cause? If not, this cause, said Sir William, is identical with motive.†

* *Prolegomena Logica*, p. 152. Mr. Mill answers this by saying: "If my conduct changes, either the external inducements or my estimate of them must have changed."—*Examination of Hamilton*, p. 563.

† Footnote on Reid, p. 609.

Tickler. But he held the doctrine of free-will.

Shepherd. Weel, ane or the ither o' ye maun be wrang.

North. Tickler is right, James, for Sir William was not a necessitist. But we are losing sight of Mr. Spencer, who notes the fact that actions termed rational are, by long-continued repetition, rendered automatic or instinctive,* from which he argues that neither memory, reason, nor volition have to do with these movements.

Tickler. Well, how does Sir William explain this undoubted fact?

North. He disagreed with Stewart's doctrine that our acts of knowledge are made up of an infinite number of acts of attention, that is, of various acts of concentrated consciousness. He equally disagreed with the opinion shared by Mr. Spencer, for he held that it was but "the assumption of an occult and incomprehensible principle," and explains nothing. His theory is "that there are acts of mind so rapid and minute as to elude the ken of consciousness."† This was also the opinion of Leibnitz, to whom he accords the honour of having originated it. Sir William gives, by way of analogy, an example from vision, showing that "an expanse of surface is necessary to the *minimum visible*—in other words, an object of sight cannot come into consciousness unless it be of a certain size;" and "in like manner," he says, "in the internal perception of a series of mental operations, a certain time, a certain duration, is necessary for the smallest section of continuous energy to which con-

* *Principles of Psychology*, vol. i. p. 456.

† *Lectures on Metaphysics*, vol. i. p. 361.

sciousness is competent. Some minimum of time must be admitted as the condition of consciousness ; and as time is divisible *ad infinitum*, whatever minimum be taken, there must be admitted to be, beyond the cognizance of consciousness, intervals of time, in which, if mental agencies be performed, these will be latent to consciousness." So the protended parts of each conscious instant, though themselves beyond the ken of consciousness, must contribute to give the character to the whole mental state which that instant comprises.*

Shepherd. Ye remind me o' Swift's lines—

"So, naturalists observe, a flea
Hath smaller fleas that on him prey ;
And these have smaller still to bite 'em,
And so proceed *ad infinitum*."

But havna ye shifted to anither subject ?

North. No, for Mr. Spencer urges as an argument against free-will this reversion of oft-repeated rational actions into automatic actions. But the writer who, of all others, has entered most fully into this question, is Mr. Bain, who alone of the Association Psychologists has offered a full, and, in the opinion of *à posteriori* philosophers, ample and satisfactory explanation of the volitional part of our nature. Hartley, as you will remember, attempted to account for it in the stimulative power of the sensations over the muscles. Without, however, staying to notice the objections urged against this theory, I will pass on to Mr. Bain's explanation of the origin of volition. Shortly, then, his theory is that the brain of itself generates the nervous influence which excites the

* p. 370.

muscles into action—not lawlessly, but under the organic stimulus of nutrition. When these spontaneous movements are found to be pleasurable, or to relieve pain, there is a tendency to prolong them; when they result in pain the tendency is to abate them.*

Tickler. But suppose I were suffering from acute pain—say toothache—and I were offered a remedy which experience had taught me was effective. Might I not decline the proffered remedy and elect to bear the pain?

Shepherd. Nae dout ye micht, thaigh you'd be a fuil to exercise your free-will in that fashion.

North. Mr. Bain would probably reply, that the cause of your rejection of the remedy was the action of some antagonistic motor which it would be easy to account for were we conversant with the states of the psychological agencies operating at the time.

Shepherd. That's just the way wi' feelosophers. Puzzle them wi' a strautferrard question and aff they fly at a tangent. But why pursue the subjeck ony farther?

North. Before leaving it, let me say that Mr. Bain deals with the appeal to consciousness which you have made in common with others. I must confess, however, that his reply to this appeal is not satisfactory to my mind.

Shepherd. What says he?

North. He thinks there is no cogency in it.

Shepherd. But that's no reply, surely?

North. Pardon me, James. He says that consciousness is to internal phenomena what observation

* *The Senses and the Intellect*, p. 293.

is to external facts, and that there is no infallibility in either.

Tickler. But if this holds good with regard to the one, it is equally good with regard to the other; and if the evidence of consciousness affords no positive proof of the reality or truthfulness of our thoughts and feelings, neither can it afford any satisfactory evidence of the external world. Admit that discrepancy may creep in, this discrepancy must be equally great in our observations of external phenomena.

North. Mr. Bain appears to doubt this.

Tickler. How so? External nature can only become known to us through consciousness, and it seems to me to be less likely that error will creep in when it reveals to us our own mental states or feelings than when it presents to us external phenomena; and if this be so, then the objection, on this ground, to the doctrine of free-will, is even of less force than it would be if applied to the credibility of an external world.

Shepherd. That sounds reasonable, and if it be, then I am weel content to rest my belief in the freedom o' the will upon the same ground as my belief in the reality o' substance.

North. But Mr. Bain does not altogether deny truth to consciousness, and his argument loses, therefore, the weight which he wishes to gain by denying its infallibility. With regard to his theory of spontaneity, I wished to remark that, in my opinion, it fails to explain volitional movements. I wish, for instance, to move my foot, and I move it accordingly. Now, of this simple fact I find no satisfactory explanation, for it is beside the question to tell us that

“if it so please us, we are at liberty to say mind is a source of power; but we must then mean by mind the consciousness in conjunction with the whole body.” *

Tickler. The question of free-will seems insoluble.

North. It certainly has not yet been solved. Even Sir William Hamilton admitted it to be wholly incomprehensible, and this seems to have been the opinion of Professor Cairnes.†

Tickler. But he held that the fact that we are free is given to us in the consciousness of our moral accountability.

North. That raises another difficult question.

Shepherd. Weel, a' that I can say is, that it will tak a' the feelosophers that ever lived to convince me that I haena the poo'r either to do, or not to do, ony act which happens to be presented to me.

North. That is because you are conscious of being able to follow your own choice.

Shepherd. Maist assuredly.

North. Ah! but Mr. Bain would reply, that by liberty of choice is meant the denial of all foreign intervention, and that, as applied to the various motives of your own mind, the expression “liberty of choice” has no meaning. Various motives concur in pushing you into action; the result of the conflict shows that one group is stronger than another, and the whole case lies in that. And Stuart Mill denied that what you are able to do is a subject of consciousness. Consciousness, he says, is not prophetic;

* *Emotions and Will*, p. 476, Second Edition.

† *Fortnightly Review*, vol. xvii. p. 82.

we are conscious of what is, not of what will or can be.*

Tickler. But does it really matter anything whether this conviction be termed consciousness or belief? Whilst recognizing the obstacles which are presented to a solution of this *vexata questio*, I shall continue to hold, with Milton, that God ordained our will

“By nature free, not overruled by fate
Inexplicable, or strict necessity.”

Shepherd. And sae shall I; for naething can convince me that I canna, by the sheer force of my will, act no ainly contrary to my desires, but again' all the moral laws which have, as I howp, been the rule o' a' my past actions. Man is not, as th' auncients believed, the puppet o' fate, else wad his life be no brichter than that of Orestes, pursued as he was by the hateful Erinnys; or of Prometheus fastened to the rock. But as the Erinnys became the Eumenides, and the son of Agamemnon found rest and peace after a' his wanderings, and as the Teetan was at length released by Hercules, so we too may surely luk forrard to the time when the trammels which hinder our investigation o' truth shall be torn aside, and we shall be permitted to see her, no ainly through a glass darkly, but face to face.

North. It is a true remark that the realms of philosophy are becoming less year by year. When it first emerged from the Grecian intellect it was the universal science, and embraced all things—man, nature, God. But how little is now left to it! The

* *Examination of Hamilton's Philosophy*, p. 503.

advancing tides of thought and observation have occupied positions which were formerly covered by the ægis of philosophy. Discarding its method, and confining themselves to observing phenomena and establishing their relations, the inductive sciences have made good their claim to be regarded as independent, whilst they have relegated to philosophy the problems which lie above and beyond them, and which seem as insoluble to-day as they did two thousand years ago. To science, properly speaking, belongs the knowable; to philosophy, the unknowable—the causes and principles of things. Science rests satisfied with generalizing certain known effects under the terms gravitation, heat, magnetism, and leaves philosophy to discover the laws which these terms summarize. And thus in course of time there will remain to philosophy, as an able French writer has said, “but the general, the abstract, the ideal,”* a field of investigation which scientists regard with much the same feeling as we do the stories taught by poets,

“Of dire chimeras and enchanted isles,”

but which in the eyes of Thyrsis merited belief. But even then philosophy will continue to engage the first order of minds; for so long as man remains on this earth, so long will he seek to unveil the secrets which surround him on every side, and to sound the depths of his own moral and intellectual nature.

Shepherd. As to me, I'm content to leave philosophy to those for whom it hath charms, preferring, for mysel', the verdant fields of poetry and song. And yet arena poetry and science twin sisters? The

* Professor Ribot's *English Psychology*, p. 12.

one, like the warm moisture of the torrid zone, beautifyin' and fertilizin' a' that it surrounds; the ither, like the snaw and ice upon some mountain range, which they make the mair difficult to climb, but which add a radiance and a glory a' their ain. Twin sisters are they! And as in the natural, sae is it in the mental world. The glory o' the ane maun, in the order o' things, precede the other. Th' imagination, like the mist, maun hover atween heaven and earth before it becomes condensed and crystallized by the chill atmosphere o' reason. Poetry is like the warmth and glow and enthusiasm o' youth, baith in man and society; science like the wisdom and experience o' manhood and mankind.

North. And yet imagination is not confined to the domain of poetry,—it has its scientific uses also. Professor Tyndall has said that without it “we might have *critical* power, but not *creative* power, in science.”*

Tickler. And Mr. Matthew Arnold, in his thoughtful *Essays in Criticism*, says that the highest reach of science is an inventive power, a faculty of divination, akin to the highest power exercised in poetry.†

Shepherd. Then science resembles literature in this respect, for although men may become guid creetics without imagination, they can never rank wi' the *Sacri Vates*. Wasna it Mr. Disraeli who ca'd creetics men wha had failed in literature?

North. Yes, he makes Mr. Phœbus describe them as “the men who have failed in literature and art;” ‡ while Landor likened them to a turbot, both eyes being on one side.

* *The Forms of Water*, p. 34. † p. 47. ‡ *Lothair*, p. 185.

Tickler. Though this may be true of some critics, it conveys a wrong impression of the value of just criticism which is defined by Mr. Arnold—one of the ablest of living critics—as “a disinterested endeavour to learn and propagate the best that is known and thought in the world.”* Although the critical is secondary to the creative faculty, it has nevertheless a noble field for its exercise, and according as its duties are ably and honestly fulfilled, will depend, in no slight degree, the character, power, and permanence of the literature of the future; for it is its province to detect the true value of a work, to ascertain whether it bears the impress of originality and truth, to fix aright its true position, to discover whether the thoughts which it contains are lit up with the irradiation of genius, or are but the dull spurts of listless mediocrity. Conscientiously and ably performed, the critic’s duties are not only noble in themselves, but are essential to the creation of a current of true and active ideas upon which the creative mind can feed, and to the due fruition of which succeeding ages will owe the noblest and the brightest pages of their literature.

North. Ah! what sound, what ineffable odour, hath been wafted to me, emanating from a god or from mortal, or of some intermediate nature? †

Shepherd. There’s nae mista’in’ the smell o’ guse. Here comes Awmrose and his retinue.

[*Enter* AMBROSE, *with his Tail and supper.*

North. It is strange, but I never see roast goose without feeling constrained to plug.

* p. 36.

† North is quoting from the *Prometheus Bound*. See Bohn’s Edition.

Shepherd. That's what is ca'd the association o' ideas. And nae wunner that the Glasgow gander has left an indelible impression no ainly upon your memory, but upon your olfactory nerves, for the stench o't was amaist incredible, and maun to a certainty hae poisoned the three o' us hadna we taen the precaution to plug. The verra thocht of it maks me feel a retchin' sensation laigh down in ma stamack.

Tickler. Come, often as we've celebrated his glories——

Shepherd. Ca' them no glories, for that wad be to confound good and evil. Say rather his obsequies.

Tickler. Well, here goes for one more song in his honour.

TICKLER *sings.*

Though the gander is dead,
It has often been said,
His form at midnight is seen ;
Holding aloft his head,
Like a goose that's well bred,
As he struts by mere and stream.

When the pale moon at night,
Shines resplendently bright,
Silvering mountain and vale ;
It is said there is heard
To proceed from a bird,
A strange and ominous wail.

A skeleton gander
Doom'd a while to wander,
Mid scenes he witness'd of yore ;
Mutters a weird-like quack,
Which puts all on the rack,
Who ne'er have heard it before.

When he was kill'd and cook'd,
 Soft and sappy he look'd,
 Like one that had known no care ;
 But when prob'd with the fork,
 There emerg'd from the dark,
 A foul pestiferous air.

It was well for the three
 At th' Ambrosian spree—
 North, the Shepherd, and Tickler—
 That their nostrils were stopp'd,
 Else stone dead they'd have dropp'd
 From their perpendicular.

As it is, there's Kit North,
 Who's a man of great worth,
 Though at times he talks too much ;
 A fine widow he'd wed,
 In spite of his game leg,
 If she'd put up with a crutch.

Then another queer dog,
 Is my friend the great Hogg,
 Who, too, was a survivor ;
 He can sing a good song,
 And drink all the night long—
 The plug did him de-li-ver.

With regard to the third,
 He's a jolly old bird,
 Whom but few men can diddle ;
 He enjoys a good laugh,
 Can a caulker e'en quaff,
 And plays upon the fiddle.

Shepherd. Hencore ! hencore !

North. Bravo, Tickler !

Tickler. And now, gentlemen, to serious eating.

Shepherd. I'm aye sorry for you, Mr. North,

when I think ye maun dee an auld bachelor like Sir Roger Coventrey,* because a yelligent widow willna listen to your suit.

North. Really, James!

Shepherd. Oh! but the guse is tender as a spring chicken!

Tickler. I fear you have wounded North's feelings, James.

Shepherd. Weel, I dinna see why Mrs. Gentle shouldna rank among the Loes o' the Poets, for she's verra beautifu' baith in mainners and person. And after a', sir, why shouldna ye twa mak a match of it? Barrin' the crutch, you're hale and hearty, and seem to gie auld age the slip.

North. What! play the lovesick youth and shame my hoary hairs like Vincilas? †

Tickler. After all, North's crutch, like the walking-stick of Abu Jahl's nephew, is more terrible than another man's sword.

Shepherd. Creetically, but no fizzically, and baith lassies and widows aye gie the preference to fizzical and no to intellectual qualities in suitors. Byron's genie couldna blind Miss Chaworth to his club fut.

North. But Byron was only a raw youth when he sued for her hand. Neither she nor the world at large had discovered in him the mighty genius which was erewhile to flash its light along the path of coming ages. Besides which, there are affinities which when discovered constitute the surest basis of domestic

* Sir Roger de Coverley.

† "Vincilas, che si grave e saggio avanti,
Canuto or pargoleggia, e vecchio amante."

happiness, and the true explanation of Byron's rejected suit is, no doubt, to be found in the fact that she discovered their unsuitableness for each other. You probably remember that Goethe wrote a novel entitled *Elective Affinities*, in which he depicted his own passion for the young Minna Herzlieb. But these were not true affinities,—rather the gross passion, as I think, of an old man who ought to have been ashamed of his infatuation.*

Tickler. What of Othello and Desdemona?

North. Her love for the Moor is unnatural, the marriage of Perseus and Andromeda notwithstanding.

Shepherd. You forget that she was but just buddin' intil womanhood when he wan her ear and her hairt by the receetal o' his conflicts,—and there's the rub. Mony a bonny lassie has fixed her affections—ere she weel knew what loe is—upon chiels auld enough to be their grandfathers; but ance haen taen root they hae clung like ivy to the ruins, which they hae beautified thaigh they couldna bless. Sae maun it hae been wi' Desdemona, for you may be sure that Shakspeer wadna hae depickit an impossible passion. He knew too muckle o' the human hairt and the passions that play around it, to make siccan a mistake. In joining the beautifu', and tender, and lovin' daughter o' Brabantio to the brave and able, though passionate and easily deluded Moor, Shakspeer shewed the sublimity o' woman's loe. But what are ye for, Tickler, that you alloo the guse to stap your mouth, whiles me and Mr. North are giein' utterance to feelosophical creeticism?

* See, however, an interesting article entitled *Goethe and Minna Herzlieb*, in the *Contemporary Review*, vol. xxvii. p. 199.

Tickler. No doubt, James, Shakespeare was fully alive to the apparent anomaly of making the Duke's fair daughter fall in love with Othello. Indeed, you remember how her father charges him with having won her heart by strange devices, and reiterates that her love was against all rules of nature. And surely it is not incredible that a girl of Desdemona's temperament and character—beautiful, and innocent, the very image of feminine modesty and tenderness—should have let her mind dwell upon the story of Othello's life; and in so doing the tendency which she, doubtless, inherited with others of her sex, to love one of her own race and colour, was conquered by her admiration of his noble qualities, which led her, as she says, to see

“— Othello's visage in his mind ;”

and to consecrate her soul and fortunes

“— to his honours and his valiant parts.”

Desdemona was timid ; Othello a brave soldier. She had seen but little of the world ; he had been the hero

“— of most disastrous chances ;

Of moving accidents by field and flood ;

Of hair-breadth 'scapes i' the imminent deadly breach.”

What wonder, then, that she loved him, seeing that he possessed the very qualities which women admire in men—bravery, honour, success ?

Shepherd. Nae mair, thank you, sir. But here comes Awmrose wi' the toddy, and just in the nick o' time.

[*Enter* AMBROSE *with* Glenlivet.

Ambrose. Shall I clear the table, gentlemen ?

Shepherd. Yes, clear awa, Awmrose, for there's but little left o' the guse but banes. Oh, but the toddy looks hot and strang ! Fill up a caulker apiece while Sir David removes the dishes. Be carefu', Tickler, how you pree't, or you'll find out, whan it's too late, that it burns like lava. [*Tastes.*] It is a grand mixture—real ambrosia—fit ainly for the gods assembled in Piccardy.

North. There is nothing comparable to whisky after goose. They harmonize, and carry peace, not strife, into the interior. Now, I have heard of persons taking brandy with oysters.

Shepherd. The iddiwutts !

North. Of course the oysters would get their backs up at once, and fight for their rights as pluckily as a hen does for her brood.

Shepherd. It is like tryin' to threaten a bonny lassie into loen anesel', instead o' admirin' her charms and flatterin' her little weaknesses, gin she has ony—which but verra few females hae ! Tak whusky and soddy,* or gin and seltzer, and the eisters are disarmed, and yield themselves a willin' sacrifice to the ingratiatin' liquor. You hae told us the nicht, sir, that there are affinities which attract persons to each ither. And sae there are chemical affinities, and the man wha acts contrary to them will learn, by sad experience, that he's but a puir ignorant coof. Rummellings in the stamach, yedaches, bilious attacks, liver complaint, dyspepsy, follow each ither i' quick succession, and the fule becomes at last a heepochondriac, if, indeed, he doesna gae clean out o' his senses.

* Soda-water.

Tickler. A foolish habit, or, as Landor would have said,—habitude,—and one very prevalent, is that of eating pickles, some kinds of which are as hot in the mouth as the ale of which Shakespeare speaks. Now, to eat pickles as an incentive to appetite, is about as absurd as the Chinese system of roasting their pigs, so humorously described by Charles Lamb. They destroy the coat of the stomach in order to make their food palatable.

North. Hum!

Shepherd. Whew!

Tickler. What's the matter?

Shepherd. You're a confooded heepocrit, Mr. Tickler.

North. It is too true; for he's as fond of condiments as a retired Indian, and eats chutney with as much relish as a German devours sausages.

Shepherd. Just sae.

Tickler. Why, really, gentlemen—

Shepherd. It's an ould practice, Tickler, to which ye hae resorted, that o' censurin' in ithers the vices that are native to yoursel'. Men too aften, alas! treat morality—I mean morality in its broadest signification—as a sort o' algebraic problem, the hail purpose o' which is to fin' out the unknown quantity in ithers by startin' frae the known quantity in themsel's.

North. Or, as Hudibras says—

“Compound for sins they are inclined to,
By damning those they have no mind to.”

But what is morality, James?

Shepherd. Tickler maun answer that.

Tickler. Morality is the harmonious adjustment of the mental and moral faculties to the decrees of conscience.

Shepherd. That's pithy, and souns true.

North. The question is too wide to be satisfactorily answered in a desultory conversation, for it raises points which have engaged the minds of the ablest philosophers from the earliest times. Plato, as you are aware, in his dialogue *Euthyphron*, argues that the native goodness is co-eternal with the Being who created all things. This goodness, or, as he otherwise expresses it, the Eternal Laws of Right, is that power which Mr. Maurice, in his *Theological Essays*,* says our conscience perceives and recognizes, and which has a claim on our obedience. Now, Mr. Mill's objection to an internal and external standard of morality is based upon the error which was shared by Butler, of thinking that our conscience is the rule or standard of morality. Mr. Maurice combats this, by holding that the conscience does not *give* a law, but *confesses* a law; it does not demand sovereignty, but pays homage.

Tickler. But how comes it that the dictates of conscience are so antagonistic in men?

North. Mr. Maurice admits the perversion of the decrees of conscience by superstition, but points out that "till the true Lord of the conscience has made Himself known to it, of necessity it must go about seeking rest and finding none. Every false king will assume dominion over it; as it bows to the impostor it will become beclouded in its judgments; the more it tries to regulate its vassals, the more mischief

* p. 231.

it will do them, the more cruel they will feel its tyranny."

Shepherd. Then Tickler's definition isna correck ?

North. Certainly not, according to Mr. Maurice's view. Whether that view is correct is another question, and one which it would be impossible for us to discuss to-night.

Shepherd. Then we'll pass it bye gin ye'll gie us a sang.

North. Really, James, I think the song should come from you, for I have contributed more than my fair share of the conversation to-night.

Shepherd. That's no an unusual occurrence, I'm thinkin', for, like Manfred, ye hae a' the talk to yoursel'. However, here gaes for an imprompty.

SHEPHERD *sings.*

I've heard the liltin at our yowe-milkin,
Lasses a-liltin before the dawn of day ;
But now they are moaning on ilka green loaning—
The Flowers of the Forest are a' wede away.

At buchts, in the morning, nae blithe lads are scorning,
The lasses are lonely, and dowie, and wae ;
Nae daffin', nae gabbin', but sighing and sobbing,
Ilk ane lifts her leglen and hies her away.

In hairst, at the shearing, nae youths now are jeering,
The bandsters are lyart, and runkled, and gray ;
At fair, or at preaching, nae wooing, nae bleaching—
The Flowers of the Forest are a' wede away.

At e'en, at the gloaming, nae swankies are roaming
'Bout stacks wi' the lasses at bogle to play ;
But ilk ane sits drearie, lamenting her dearie—
The Flowers of the Forest are a' wede away.

Dule and wae for the order, sent our lads to the Border !
 The English, for ance, by guile wan the day ;
 The Flowers of the Forest, that foucht aye the foremost,
 The prime o' our land, are cauld in the clay.

We hear nae mair liting at our yowe-milking,
 Women and bairns are heartless and wae ;
 Sighing and moaning on ilka green loaning—
 The Flowers of the Forest are a' wede away.

Tickler. Come, come, James! you don't wish us to believe you improvised that?

Shepherd. And why no, pray?

Tickler. It is too beautiful.

North. Ah! but it is impossible to guage the power of true genius. It can soar aloft into the empyrean, and catch

“The light that never was on sea or land;”

whilst ordinary mortals must pant to catch an inspiration from their native hills.

Shepherd. Haw, haw, haw!

North. What is the cause of this merriment?

Shepherd. Ye're a couple o' deluded creetics.

North. Explain yourself, Mr. Hogg.

Shepherd. Ye maun be carefu' in future how ye use the crutch to ony ane wha happens to blunder, for I've taen ye in.

North. What do you mean, sir?

Shepherd. I mean that the sang I hae just sung isna o' ma ain composition at a', but is *The Flowers o' the Forest*, by bonny Jane Elliot.

Tickler. I had my suspicions.

Shepherd. Dinna try to save your ignorance by leein', Tickler. Aiblinks Mr. North had his suspicions, too?

North. I do not pretend, sir, to remember all the poems in our language.

Shepherd. Noo, that's honest, and I admire ye for makin' sae damagin' a confession. But ye needna luk glum, nor stand upon your dignity, because I hae succeeded in trippin' up sae able a creetic as Christopher North. Nae man has a greater respect for your knowledge o' leetature o' a' kinds, than has the Shepherd, to wham ye hae aften rendered timely praise, and wha values your friendship as that no ainly o' a great, but o' a guid man.

North. Shake hands, my dear Shepherd, and let us say no more about it.

Shepherd. Let's celebrate our reconciliation—gin it can be ca'd such—wi' a libation, as th' auncients were accustomed to do. Come, Tickler, fill up. Noo, are ye baith ready? Then tak time frae me.

[*The Three pledge each other in a bumper.*]

North. There are many beautiful poems, James, which are almost unknown even to the lovers of the divine art. Many of these have been written by poets who, perhaps, never wrote more than a few songs, and their compositions not being bulky enough to have gained for them separate publication, the memory of them becomes contingent upon their finding a place in collections like Percy's *Reliques*. May I ask where you met with *The Flowers of the Forest*?

Shepherd. I happen to hae had a gift made o' Mr. Gilfillan's collection o' the poems o' what he ca's the lesser known poets, and that is amang them. But there are many equally beautifu'. Mr. Nicholl was gude enough to send me the work to the Forest, and I had thocht o' reviewin' his edition o' the poets,

but I fun' I couldna weel do sae, seein' that these are the ainly volumes o' the series I hae.

North. It is a noble edition, and both editor and publisher have done their work well. But a review of the poets would surely have been too encyclopedic for our short-lived race to read. Methusaleh might, perhaps, have found time for such a labour.

Tickler. It would be like naming the animals—a task which even Adam must have felt to be irksome.

Shepherd. Hoo his descendants came to remember their names is a puzzle, especially if the names were anything like those we find in the Natural Histories o' the present day, which seem to hae been written wi' the object, no' of makin' the lesson easy and agreeable, but as difficult as possible.

Tickler. And, after all, what practical use is natural history? Unless one intends to imitate Livingstone, and explore the trackless forests and boundless lakes and rivers of Africa or South America, I don't see of what practical use it is. And even then a well-charged revolver would be far more useful.

North. Ah! but there are other and nobler purposes which may be subserved by this knowledge. Take, for instance, the doctrine of evolution. It would have been impossible for Mr. Darwin to have discovered what he believes to be the true theory of man's origin and development, without his marvellous knowledge of the physiology and habits of the animal world. Nor should we forget that, as we become familiarized with the history and habits of animals, we become more humane in our treatment of them.

Shepherd. You maun qualify your remark, sir; for you surely dinna mean to say that we should act differently towards a wild beast, gin we were unfortunate enough to meet ane, however accurate our knowledge of its antecedents, than if we simply knew that it wad be thankfu' for a guid dinner, e'en thaigh we were to constitute the joint.

North. I was certainly not thinking of such an event, James. But it is unquestionable that familiarity with the history and habits of the animal world does foster in mankind a kindlier feeling towards the brute creation.

Shepherd. That is nae dout true o' some species, but no of a'. Monkeys for example, become to me mair odious each time I see ane. They are a dirty, deceitfu', disgustin' race, and I canna endure them.

Tickler. Let us hope, James, that your dislike does not proceed from the same cause as Luttrell's, who disliked monkeys because they reminded him of poor relations.*

Shepherd. At all events, I'm content to keep them where maist folk keep their puir relations—at a respectfu' distance.

North. Luttrell's dislike to monkeys is mentioned in the Princess Mary of Lichenstein's *Holland House*, is it not?

Tickler. Yes; it was there I saw it.

Shepherd. Gin the byuck is equal to its subject, it maun be verra interestin'.

North. You are right; for I know of no house possessing so many interesting associations. How many eminent men in politics, literature, and art

* *Holland House*, vol. i. p. 153.

have cast the halo of their genius around it! Charles James Fox, the brilliant and humane; Pitt, the eloquent and patriotic; the incomparable Reynolds; the versatile Brougham; the gentle and accomplished Mackintosh; the ornate Macaulay; the elegant Roger; the witty Sydney Smith; the learned and impartial Hallam; the brilliant Jeffrey; the fiery Grattan. But why cite names, when all who were most eminent for genius, ability, and learning graced it with their presence?

Shepherd. A' gane to their lang last hame.

Tickler.—

“So whene'er I turn my eye
Back upon the days gone by,
Saddening thoughts of friends come o'er me,
Friends who closed their course before me.”

Shepherd. Wha's is that?

Tickler. Uhland's.

North. Yes, all gone into the Silent Land. And yet the fragrance of their memories is sweet as morning air exhaled from a bank of violets. Let us, whilst thinking of their virtues, bid each other good night.

Shepherd. You're surely no gaen yet, when——

[GURNEY, however, vanishes from the cupboard.]

VI.

SCENE—*The Snuggery.* Time—*Nine o'clock.*

Present.—NORTH, TICKLER, and SHEPHERD.

Tickler. One passage more and I have done. He is yet speaking of the English Church. [*Reads.*]

“Created in the first instance by a court intrigue, pervaded in all its parts by a spirit of the most intense Erastianism, and aspiring at the same time to a spiritual authority scarcely less absolute than that of the Church which it had superseded, Anglicanism was from the beginning at once the most servile and the most efficient agent of tyranny. Endeavouring by the assistance of temporal authority and by the display of worldly pomp to realize in England the same position as Catholicism had occupied in Europe, she naturally flung herself on every occasion into the arms of the civil power. No other Church so uniformly betrayed and trampled on the liberties of her country.”*

Shepherd. That's strang, Tickler, verra strang, and I howp no true.

Tickler. It is but too true, for it is indubitable that the Roman and Anglican Churches have almost invariably opposed the liberties of the people.

North. Your charge, Tickler, like most sweeping accusations, is only a partial truth, it being undeniable that the influence of the Church in this, as in other countries, has not unfrequently promoted the growth

* *Lecky's Rationalism in Europe*, vol. ii. p. 178, Fourth Edition.

of liberty. Take the history of our own country and what do we find?

Tickler. That it proves what I have stated. It is hardly necessary to cite instances in proof of the Church's opposition to freedom prior to the Reformation, whilst as to its later attitude we have the admission of Dr. Arnold,* that since Elizabeth's time the clergy of the Church of England "have politically been a party opposed to the cause which in the main has been the cause of improvement."

North. But you forget the many crises at which the dignitaries of the Church have, in spite of their Head, aided the acquisition of constitutional liberty.

Shepherd. Gin this be true, Tickler maun qualify his accusation. But can you gie us a few instances in proof o' this?

North. It seems to me superfluous to so do, James, for Tickler will hardly deny that Anselm withstood William Rufus; that Theobald rescued England from the lawlessness of Stephen; that Langton opposed the tyranny of John; or that Rich resisted the exactions of Henry the Third. And did not Sewel suffer excommunication rather than yield to the insatiate demands of Pope Alexander the Fourth? and Archbishop Winchelsey join the Earls of Hereford and Norfolk in withstanding the illegal exactions of Edward the Second, and in summoning a new Parliament which limited the right of the Crown to levy taxes save by the consent of the realm? Wycliffe, too, undismayed by the threats of the Pontiff, proclaimed the right of private judgment in matters of religion, the supremacy of the

* Dean Stanley's *Life of Dr. Arnold*, vol. i. p. 362, Tenth Edition.

State in secular affairs, and the sole authority of Scripture; whilst Warham was the generous and enlightened patron of Colet and Erasmus — the teachers of a reformed faith which scorned the subtilities and dogmas of mediævalism, and built itself upon a rational interpretation of the Gospels.

Shepherd. That'll do for the present, sir.

North. And did not the Church contribute largely to the success of the Revolution?

Tickler. Yes; she opposed James when he threatened her supremacy, and so soon as the Revolution was accomplished she did her utmost to undo the glorious work she had aided in accomplishing. But what of Wolsey and his efforts to govern without Parliaments? What of Parker and the High Commission? What of Whitgift and his attempt to gag the press? What of the Convocation of 1604, and its base servility to the absurd theory of the divine right of kings? What of Laud and his Romanizing policy, and doctrine of passive obedience? What of the attitude of the Church in the conflict between Charles and his Parliament? What of Sheldon and the Conventicle, and Five Mile Acts?

Shepherd. Mr. North maun answer, for I canna.

North. Well, even in those days Archbishop Grindal suffered sequestration rather than suppress prophesyings, and Abbot was one with the people in his antipathy to James the First's Spanish policy, and was suspended in Charles's reign for refusing to sanction the courtly sermon of Sibthorp.

Tickler. We find that in more recent times, too, the clergy were the persistent supporters of the wars against France and America, and the determined

opponents of every liberal movement. And what of the popes? Have they not been enemies to English liberty? Every chapter of our history proves this conclusively.

Shepherd. That's too general, Tickler. Ye maun cite cases.

Tickler. Nothing is easier, James; for Innocent the Third annulled the Great Charter; * his successor sided with the infamous John against the barons; Gregory the Ninth and Innocent the Fourth aided Henry the Third in his wholesale pillage; Boniface granted a brief to Edward the First, annulling the statute which limited the right of the Crown to levy taxes.

North. But, my dear Tickler, these instances only throw into stronger relief the conduct of those bishops who, in spite of the hostility of their Head, lent their influence to aid the growth of our liberties. These, although Churchmen, were, above all, Englishmen. Nevertheless, I believe the Church of England would have been more uniformly on the side of the people had she ceased to be connected with the Crown; for that connection has, I regret to say, too frequently resulted in the adoption by the Church of a policy which has sacrificed everything to her privileges. I cannot help thinking that both religion and freedom would have been best promoted by the absolute separation and mutual independence of spiritual and secular affairs. Indeed, one of the great evils incident to this alliance is, that in times of active political controversy the sympathies of the Church

* See Cardinal Manning's article in *The Contemporary*, vol. xxvii. p. 1, in which he maintains that Innocent did not condemn the Charter, but the mode in which it was obtained.

are directed by her interests, and are thus placed in antagonism to the principle of equality of men in the eye of the law, whilst she declares them to be equal before God; the result being, that those who strive for the extension of freedom are induced to reject what otherwise they would reverence and embrace.*

Shepherd. And yet the Church has aften, in times o' adversity, discovered true nobility.

North. Very true, James; and the same trait has not unfrequently characterized individuals.

Tickler. From which we may deduce that adversity, not prosperity, fosters true nobility in man; for, as ascending air is chilled by expansion, so the traits which are most human are too often chilled by success.

North. I may instance, in proof of what I stated a moment ago, the political antagonism at present unfortunately existing between Ireland and the rest of the United Kingdom. This is attributable in a great measure to the Protestantizing policy pursued in the reigns of Henry, Edward, and Elizabeth.

Shepherd. Weel, thaigh I'm no muckle o' a student o' history, I can believe what you say; for had a similar policy been persisted in as regards Scotland, there wadna hae been that poleetical eedentity atween the twa kintras there is the noo.

Tickler. It is a mournful fact, that many of the

* "Christianity, which has declared that all men are equal in the sight of God, will not refuse to acknowledge that all citizens are equal in the eye of the law. But, by a singular concurrence of events, religion is entangled in those institutions which democracy assails, and it is not unfrequently brought to reject the equality it loves, and to curse that cause of liberty as a foe which it might hallow by its alliance."—De Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*, vol. i. p. 10.

evils hitherto attendant upon the progress of nations have arisen from the ill-judged efforts of religionists, who, in attempting to enforce uniformity in religion, have sown the seeds of political disunion and hatred.

North. Nevertheless, do not understand me as blaming one religious party more than another; for however misdirected may have been the policy of the Roman or Anglican Churches, it cannot be denied that Puritanism and Presbyterianism have discovered in their hour of triumph the same fatal tendency to persecution.

Shepherd. Sae that, like the fauns and satyrs amongst wham Una dwelt, and wha worshipped her in vain, men are too apt to make the rites o' their religion the object of their idolatry, instead of recognizing the truths they are intended to illustrate.

North. And, after all, has the Church done more than exhibit a bias common to all men?

Shepherd. I canna answer the question, seein' I dinna ken what ye are drivin' at.

North. I refer to the tendency of men to push their own peculiar opinions to an extreme. Granted that theologians attach too much importance to their individual dogmas, is not the same error observable in ourselves? Perhaps no greater antagonism has been shown in all ages than that which has developed from the ardour exhibited by theologians and scientists in their own pursuits. A certain degree of benefit has, no doubt, resulted to mankind in general from their diverse views of certain facts and theories; and although their never was, perhaps, a period when a more truly catholic spirit pervaded these two classes of men, it cannot be denied that in certain circles the

teachings of modern science are regarded with unconcealed hostility, nor that scientists have too often displayed, if they have not openly avowed, a semi-serious infidelity not unlike that of the scholars of the age of Lorenzo de Medici.

Tickler. And yet, as you have remarked, the world at large has profited by this antagonism, for the opposition of the one party begets a kindred spirit of ardour in the other, and thus the sea of thought is kept wholesome, and its atmosphere made bracing, by the disturbing currents of counter-opinions.

North. This view was not, however, shared by Rousseau, whose *Discours sur les Sciences et les Arts* I was reading only a few days ago.

Shepherd. What is his notion, then?

North. He maintains, and with much plausibility, that men's minds are corrupted in the degree that science and art advance to perfection.

Shepherd. The deil he does!

North. The daily rise and ebb of the tide have not, he says, been more dependent upon the course of the moon than has the fate of morals and of probity upon the progress of science and art; and he instances Egypt, Greece, Rome, Constantinople, and China as affording proofs of this, whilst he cites the ancient Persians, the Scythians, and the Germans as peoples in whom virtue and ignorance flourished together.

Tickler. Ah! but one must pardon such notions in the author of the *Nouvelle Heloïse*. No doubt breeches were, in his opinion, a foolish invention, and marriage a degrading bondage. Fig-leaves and Eden were, in his mind, inseparably connected.

North. But imagine him apostrophizing Sparta

in this vein : "O Sparta, eternal reproach to a vain doctrine ! Whilst vices, led by the fine arts, were together gaining entrance into Athens ; whilst a tyrant collected there with so much care the works of the prince of poets, thou chased from thy walls the arts and the artists, the sciences and the wise !" Now, although it is perfectly true that great intellectual culture may co-exist with moral degradation, it by no means follows that the latter springs from the former ; for even if it be granted that education will not alone make a bad man moral, its tendency is certainly not to debase, but to refine, the moral sentiment. When, therefore, Seneca declared that since the appearance of learned men good men had become scarce, he judged wrongly in attributing such paucity to the diffusion of learning.

Tickler. Carlyle has somewhere said that there are unhappy times in the world's history when he that is the least educated will chiefly have to say that he is the least perverted.*

Shepherd. What say ye to that, sir ; for Carlyle is a clever chiel, and dusna mak random statements ?

North. But the perversion of which he speaks must arise from circumstances other than the influence of education—such, for instance, as the aggravation of wrong tendencies ; and, as Montaigne said, "The business of education is not to find a man eyes, but to clear them, and to regulate a man's steps, provided he has good feet and legs of his own." It cannot, however, be denied that there are evils attendant upon misguided learning, but these evils owe their origin, as Archer Butler has remarked, "to errors respecting the

relation which human nature bears to the objects of its knowledge, and still more to errors regarding the source and nature of its real happiness."*

Shepherd. That's verra true.

North. He further remarks that "these errors can only be neutralized by opposing truths—truths which shall rectify alike its fallacies as to speculation and its follies as to practice."

Shepherd. It wad indeed be sad to think that the cultivation o' the brichtest gift that God has gien to his creatures should be opposed to their highest welfare. But we're forgettin' Roossoo.

North. Rousseau's fondness for his pet theory led him not only to misinterpret history, but even Socrates, whom he quotes as the eulogist of ignorance, the fact being that the philosopher, in speaking of poets——

Tickler. Poets, James ; poets !

Shepherd. Dunno interrump', Tickler.

North. ——and artists, censures their self-conceit in imagining themselves possessed of all 'he wisdom in the world, when, in reality, they knew nothing ; whilst for himself, if he knew nothing, he at least recognized his own ignorance.

Tickler. Had not the absurdities of Rousseau's theory been already abundantly exposed, one might have felt tempted to enter the lists against him, and to break every bone in his theoretic skin by a duodecimo.

Shepherd. Nay, nay, Mr. Tickler, owthership isna your forte ; sae be thankfu' that ithers hae saved ye the trouble as weel's the loss.

Tickler. You are enigmatical, James.

* *Lectures on Hist. of Ancient Phil.*, vol. i. pp. 90, 94.

North. James appears to be of opinion that were you to rush into print, your publishers might have to complain, as did Sweynheim and Paunartz to Sixtus the Fourth, of the poverty which befel him from having published an unsaleable book.

Tickler. Well, some of the best books ever written have failed to hit the public taste.

North. So that, like the San Graal which was invisible to all eyes but those of the pure in heart, the merits of your performance would be hid from those who lacked the spirit of appreciation.

Shepherd. At a' events let us be thankfu' Tickler hasna committed himsel' to an historico-feelosophical reply to Monseer Roosoo.

Tickler. Take care, my dear Shepherd, that you err not yourself in wielding too frequently the pen; for remember it was Horace who said—

“— gods, and men, and booksellers agree
To place their ban on middling poetry.”

Shepherd. Confoond your impudence, Mr. Timothy Tickler! Ye never were mair mista'en in your life gin ye think that ony poems by the owther o' the *Queen's Wake* maun ever gang a-beggin' for a publisher.

North. No fear of that, James; though, judging from the present dearth of poetical geniüs, one is led to think that the taste for poetry is on the decline.

Shepherd. Ye surely canna expect folk to hae a taste for bad poetry?

Tickler. History, philosophy, and theology appear to be in the ascendant just now. Indeed, the number of books treating of religion yearly issuing from

the press, is astonishing, and indicates a wide-spread interest in the subject. The fact, however, is partially to be accounted for by the unsettling influence which characterizes recent scientific writings. Authors like Tyndall, Darwin, and Huxley—to say nothing of Mill, Spencer, Lewis, Morley, and a host of others—have, by the tendency of their works, called into activity the polemical spirit of every school of religious thought.

North. Another and very important cause of this influx of theological literature is to be found in the more congenial and Christian spirit which pervades the teachers and professors of religion. In former times a freezing austerity and puritanical longfacedness were esteemed by many very estimable men essential signs of true devotion. The consequence was that people were led to believe that religion was as repulsive as the saturnine complexion of its misguided devotees. Thanks, however, to a more enlightened Christianity, this error has, in a great measure, been corrected, and the fallacy of supposing that when religion is embraced there must be an end to “cakes and ale,” has been exploded.

Shepherd. There is baith wisdom and humour in your remark.—And thus it seems that men, being persuaded that a smilin’ countenance and a joyous temperament are as muckle in harmony wi’ the practice o’ true religion—and, indeed, mair conducive to its growth—than a lang face, frigid formulasim, and sniffings, ainly partially suppressed, as thaigh they’d escaped into expression contrary to the wull o’ the owther o’ them, hae been led to devote some attention to religious writings; and the book of sermons

is found in their hauns, instead o' leadin a life o' undisturbed repose upon the tapmaist shelf o' the dusty bookcase.

Tickler. Very true, James.

Shepherd. Ay, it's true aneuch; and the fact is fraught wi' blessings, for it no ainly indicates the prevalence o' a better spirit and mair enlightened judgment in Christian professors, but reveals a state which contrasts maist favourably wi' that which formerly prevailed. When you and me were young raw lads, pawrents erred too generally on the side o' severity and restriction, fancyin' that the exhibition o' parental tenderness had a tendency to lessen the feelin' o' respect and the growth o' obedience in their offspring—the result, in too many instances, being, that they revered and feared mair than they loved them, and sae soon as the influence of hame was withdrawn, the pendulum o' restrained tastes and appetites swang wi' unreasonin' impetus intil the gratification o' delusive joys and direfu' excesses.

Tickler. And so we come round to my pet theory of the happy mean; for, as Aristotle truly said, virtue lies in the mean between the two extremes of too little and too much.

Shepherd. There's nae denyin' it; for doesna prudence degenerate intil avarice, thriftiness intil covetousness, bravery intil temerity, generosity intil prodigality, when pushed to excess?

Tickler. The moral of which is summed up in Horace's direction to us to

“— observe the mean,
And neither be too lukewarm, nor too keen.”

The true end of education is therefore to give an

incentive to the tendencies for good, which are but weakly developed in us, and to restrain those of a contrary character. As the religious sentiment——

Shepherd. Ca' ye't a sentiment ?

Tickler. ——has sometimes in former ages developed into mysticism by reason of a foolish contempt for everything external, and as, similarly, the laws of chivalry which produced “the manly gallantry of an Ivanhoe” have also resulted in “the euphuism of a Sir Percy Shafton;” so, in the present day, modes of culture or tracts of thought that are suitable to some, may work irretrievable mischief to others.

North. Your reference to education reminds me of an article in a recent number of *The Contemporary*,* the author of which—Lady Verney—has fallen into the strange error of attributing to the drolleries of *Punch* and *Judy* an evil influence upon the characters of those who witness their performances. Her ladyship, in classing *Punch* with such plays as *Dick Turpin* and *Jack*, forgets that their perniciousness arises from the actions of cut-throats being presented in a false light, by which means crime becomes surrounded with a halo of romance, and the heroic propensities of youthful natures are misdirected. *Punch*, however, is a vehicle for harmless mirth and merriment. The fallacy of Lady Verney's position lies in the mistake which she commits of imagining that people imitate that which amuses them. The truth is, they embrace the heroic, not the ludicrous. We laugh at the scoundrel Gil Blas, but do not select him for imitation. In like manner we enjoy the brawling impudence,

* Vol. xxv. p. 608.

rollicking humour, and absurd excesses of Falstaff,* but we do not mistake them for virtues; and Lady Verney may dispel her fears as to the evil augury which, in her view, the popularity of *Punch* bears to the juvenile audiences that are amused by his antics.

Shepherd. Wad that we could still enjoy the harmless drolleries o' *Punch*! But the langer we live and the fewer become our enjoyments. We exchange wonder for experience, feeling for knowledge, and learn, whan it's tòo late, hoo poor an exchange it is.

“ But who can guess that crisis of the soul
 When the old glory first forsakes the goal?
 When Knowledge halts and sees but cloud before;
 When sour'd Experience whispers 'hope no more';
 When every onward footstep from our side
 Parts the slow friend or hesitating guide;
 When envy rots the harvest in the sheaf;
 When faith in virtue seems the child's belief;
 And life's last music sighs itself away
 On some false lip, that kiss'd but to betray?”

Noo I'se just bet the baith o' ye a caulker ye canna name the owther o' thae lines.

North. I never wager, James.

Shepherd. That's as true a lee as ever was uttered.

Tickler. Nor do I.

Shepherd. That shews that leein's a vice as catchin' as the mizzles.† Weel, then, Bullwer wrote them.

Tickler. Then my surmise was correct.

Shepherd. Maybe, Mr. Tickler, ye imagine that

* “Falstaff,” says M. Taine, “is so frankly immoral, that he ceases to be so,”—*History of English Literature*, vol. i. p. 323.

† *Mizzles* = measles.

because to-morrow will be the Sabbath 'it doesna much matter whether ye hae to account for a sin the mair or less, and sae ye indulge in supposititious facts wi' the view o' gainin' credit for creetical discrimination ye dinna possess.

Tickler. Really, James——

Shepherd. Oh, ye auld hypocrite ! But, as I was remarkin', Bullwer's poetry has been ower much neglected. Indeed, it wad seem as thaigh the warld wullna alloo a writer to be great in mair than ae single domain; and sae it is that, haein' distinguished himsel' as a novelist o' the first order, Bullwer is denied the praise justly due to him as a poet. And yet his poems are elegant, and aften pregnant wi' fine thocht. Tak, for example, the lines :—

“ Silence came back, with wings that seem'd to brood
In watch more loving over solitude.”

Or these :—

“ Life has no mystery from our sights more far
Than the still joy in solemn Poet-souls.”

Or what can be truer than these ?—

“ For warning oft-times makes more sure the ill,
Or fires suspicion to believe the worst,
Or bids temptation be more fondly nurst ;
Nought ripens evil like too prompt a blame,
And virtue totters if you sap its shame.”

North. Your praise is well merited, James, though the subjects of Bulwer's poems are not, as a whole, well chosen, and probably this may account for their limited success. *The New Timon* contains many passages of great beauty, but it is marred by others

that remind one of the fantastic gargoyles which project from ancient abbeys and churches, and which surprise us with their deformity. But though Bulwer undoubtedly possessed talent of the highest order, he lacked, or I am mistaken, true genius, and the consequence is that, in spite of the elaborate finish, the learning, and the consummate literary art displayed in his poetry, it has failed to attain an equal success to that secured by less pretentious, but more original, poems.

Shepherd. Weel, Spenser — no the feelosopher, but the poet—has said that poetry is no art, but a divine gift and heavenly instinct not to be gotten by labour and learning, but adorned wi' baith.

North. And yet Bulwer deemed *King Arthur* the worthiest contribution offered by him to the literature of his country.* I suppose, however, this is to be explained by the partiality which authors, like mothers, evince for their weaker offspring.

Tickler. Milton, too, entertained the like partiality for *Paradise Regained*.

North. The fact is doubtful, though the impression is commonly received. It has probably been derived from Dr. Johnson.† De Quincey,‡ however, denied its truth.

Shepherd. Dinna let us waste time ower the question, for it isna worth discussin'. Tell creetics o' his partiality for it, and they will strive to pruve, by the maist logical reasonin' and the maist approved canons o' creetishism, that he was clearly and un-

* See Preface to *King Arthur*.

† "His last poetical offspring was his favourite."—*Life of Milton*.

‡ Vol. x. of his Works, p. 94.

mistakeably and utterly wrang. I sometimes think o' creetics as puir creeturs cast upon a desert island, and sae destitute o' food as to be ready to seize upon the barest morsel o' the meanest fare which a flying owther happens to drap within their reach.

Tickler. The critic would change the simile, James, and compare himself to Elijah, to whom authors, like ravens "with their horny beaks," bring food "even and morn."

Shepherd. I've nae objection; for as the prophet wad hae perished o' hunger, hadna it been for the ravens, sae creetics wad cease to be, if owthers didna provide them wi' pabulum. Not that I haena a verra great respeck for legitimate creeticism, for I'm no sae conceitit as to daur to

" — defy the omnipotent to arms."

When they comport themsels as befits their high callin', they are entitl'd to unqualified praise, for wi' them aften rests the happiness or misery o' a life;* and thaigh it is well that their judgments shouldna be influenced by their sympathies, it wad nevertheless be weel if they had ever present to their minds the importance o' their richtly estimatin' the writings which they venture to praise or condemn.

North. As Bulwer says—

"Every true critic—from the Stagirite
To Schlegel and to Addison—hath won
His fame by serving a reflected light,
And clearing vapour from a clouded sun."

With respect, however, to *King Arthur*, there is one

* See "Anecdotes on Censured Authors," in *Curiosities of Literature*.

very obvious fault to be found with it, namely, the really absurd—nay, ridiculous—events which are incorporated with the story. Such, for instance, are the adventures related of Gawaine in the sixth and eighth books. What think you of these verses?—

“ At that recital made in tone complacent,
The frozen Knight stared speechless and aghast,
Stared on those jaws to which he was subjacent,
And felt the grinders cranch on their repast.
Meanwhile the Priest said, ‘ Keep your spirits up,
And ere I go, say when you’d like to sup.’ ”

Shepherd. This verra instant, say I.
North.—

“ ‘ Sup ! ’ faltered out the melancholy Knight,
‘ Sup ! pious sir—no trouble there, I pray !
Good tho’ I grant my natural appetite,
The thought of Freya’s takes it all away :
As for the dog—poor, unenlighten’d glutton,
Blind to the future,—let him have his mutton.’ ”

Tickler. This is after the manner of *The Ingoldsby Legends*. It does seem strange that a writer of such exquisite literary taste should have deemed such stuff worthy of a place in an epic romance.

North. The contrast between this and other verses in the same books is certainly startling. I’ll give one more quotation, and I’ve done :—

“ Nature, thou earliest Gospel of the Wise,
Thou never-silent Hymner unto God !
Thou Angel-Ladder lost amid the skies,
Tho’ at the foot we dream upon the sod !
To thee the Priesthood of the Lyre belong—
They hear Religion and reply in Song ! ”

Shepherd. Pray, how long are we to continue

“ Within the direful grasp
Of savage hunger ? ”

North. Ring the bell, Tickler.

[*Enter MR. AMBROSE with a round of beef,
SIR DAVID GAM with a couple of boiled
fowls, and TAPPYTOORIE with a haggis.*

Shepherd. Aweel, Awmrose, but the fare is excellent. Tappytoorie, like a second Atlas, seemed wechted wi' anither warld. Howsomever, we'se no pit his strength to the like test when supper's ower. But what's in the jug ?

Ambrose. Ale, sir.

[*Exit AMBROSE and the Tail, and a profound
silence prevails for fifteen minutes, each one
having helped himself to the dish before him.*

Shepherd. Ye're seelent the nicht, Mr. Tickler.
Why dinna ye tauk ?

Tickler. You remember what Malebranche said ?

Shepherd. Wha's he ?

Tickler. A French writer, who said that profound meditators do not choose to speak, like others, merely for the sake of talking.

Shepherd. Sae ye think yoursel' a second Malbranch !

“ O my Antonio, I do know of these
That therefore only are reputed wise,
For saying nothing.”

It isna wise, Mr. Tickler, to draw a deduction from an hypothetical premiss.

Tickler. I'll trouble you, James, for a wing of the fowl.

Shepherd. Do you mean to insinuate that I hae eaten the haill o' th' ither?

North. Tickler was anxious to change the subject.

Shepherd. Weel, I never like to push an advantage too far. Rax ower the yill, Tickler, and I'll forgie you. [*Tastes.*] Oh! but it's just perfeck. Clear as crystal and sparklin' as dew, it invigorates the body while it assuages the thirst; and yet some folks dinna like yill,—no that I'm too partial to it mysel', for a caulker o' Glenlivet, a glass o' champagne, or a bowl o' milk, are a', at times, equally welcome. But soddy's* ma aversion. Sic wishy-washy stuff isna worthy o' an honest man's stamack.

North. And yet, with a dash of brandy, James—

Shepherd. Nae brandy for me, excepp as a medicine, or after eatin' guse, when a thimblefu'—ta'en as a liqueur—is haillsome, as it settles the onions and prevents civil discord. At such times its properties are truly medicinal.

Tickler. What say you to a glass of hock?

Shepherd. Waur and waur. It's like bad sherry gane stale, and—between oursels—I'm told it plays the deevil wi' ane's kidneys. If this be true, there's na wunner the emperor deed o' the geological complaint.

Tickler. For myself, I should, like Bob Fudge, prefer my kidneys done with champagne.

North. Suppose you change the subject, gentlemen, for

“A chiel's amang you taking notes,
And, faith! he'll prent it.”

* *Soddy* = soda-water.

Shepherd. Ay, ay, change the subjeck, lest you should be reminded o' th' inevitable result o' your fondness for madery. But, sir, tak ma advice, and never let anither drop run doun your thrapple; for, of a' complaints goot is, I jalouse, the maist painfu' and irritatin', and there's nae drink as bad's madery for layin' up ane's legs in a bandbox. Then consider the trouble ye'll gie to Mrs. Gentle, to say naething o' the incivilities you micht subjeck her to, for nae man o' woman born is proof again' the tortures o' the goot.

North. As a patient, James, I am simply perfect; for I can suffer with fortitude, if not with cheerfulness.

Shepherd. I'se no believe't; for thaigh you reevalled Job in patience, you couldna endure the pains o' goot wi' composure.

North. Tickler, I'll trouble you for some haggis. I beg pardon; I see it is with James, so I'll trouble him.

Shepherd. Sae ye shall, gin ye can catch me; sae here gaes.

[*The SHEPHERD weighs anchor, and with a brilliant bound lands with the "great chieftain' o' the puddin'-race" at the north end of the table.*]

North. Help, help, Tickler!

[*NORTH and TICKLER give chase, and after an exciting run double upon the SHEPHERD, and capture the prize south-east of the board.*]

Shepherd. Whew! hoo I perspire! But I could hae won in a canter hadna it been for the wecht o' the haggis.

North (presenting the dish to TICKLER).

“Take, what I had not won except for you.”

[TICKLER *smilingly accepts the proffered gift and sets it upon the table.*

Shepherd. Tickler reminded me o’ young Azim when Zelica fell unveiled at his feet, he looked so mute and doubtingly at the haggis—

“Ere he could think *it* was *indeed* his own.”

Tickler. Shall I help you to a plateful, James?

Shepherd. That’s real poleetness, and shows how a true gentleman can no ainly win, but merit, success. After Mr. North, sir, for he maun be served first.

North. Thank you, James. And now, having regained breath, allow me to pledge you both in a bumper.

Shepherd. We’ll pledge each other in a loving cup.

[*The jug is passed round accordingly.*

How thankfu’ we should be that we are thus permitted to meet and sup together, and no ainly to enjoy the food, but to consecrate it wi’ true thankfu’-ness and the amenities o’ friendship!

Tickler. And yet some virtuously minded people would have us believe they despise money.

Shepherd. Weel, I at least amna sae sinfu’.

North. Nor am I. Indeed, the danger is lest we place too high a value upon its possession. Rightly used, money is a great blessing; and even the abuse of it has not unfrequently been productive of great benefits to mankind.

Shepherd. Explain, sir.

North. We are indebted to the power of money for many of our chiefest liberties, many of our most prized charters; the prodigality or the wars of our early kings having enabled the boroughs to purchase charters conferring rights which they might have waited long ere obtaining from the Crown's wisdom or good will. Especially was this the case from the eleventh to the end of the fourteenth centuries.

Tickler. And yet how often have nations and individuals suffered from the rapacity of kings! How have the Jews, for instance, been robbed and pillaged and ostracized, to gratify the cupidity of needy sovereigns!

Shepherd. I know of naething mair humiliatin' to a true Christian than the contemplawtion o' the history o' the Jewish people; for instead o' rememberin' that to them the world is indebted for its Christianity, and strivin' to repay this debt o' gratitude by lovin'-kindness, Christian nations have, during many centuries, reviled and proscribed them. Luk at Shylock! Do men, whilst readin' *The Merchant o' Venice*, or seein' it acted upon the stage, fully realize the previous history of him and his race? Granted that he was prompted to lend Bassanio the three thousand ducats by the basest motives, and that he hated baith him and Antonio because they were Christians, had he no cause for his hatred? Study weel the character o' the Jew as drawn by Shakspeer, and it will become apparent that he hated Christians because they hated his ain sacred nation—because he and his fellows had felt the tooth o' the "land rats" who had preyed upon their riches, and because they had winced under the sneers and the insults of lordly Christians. Nae

wunner that Shylock—the man wha had been reviled as a misbeliever, cut-throat dog, and wha had been spat upon—should, when opportunity offered, hae sought to revenge himsel' upon those who, even whilst they sought his help, evinced their contempt and hatred o' him and his race. Hoo vividly I can recall at this maement the intense bitterness wi' which Kean recounted hoo he, Shylock, had been reviled and mocked and lauched at because he was a Jew, and wi' what scathin' irony he asked, "Hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions?"

North. It was, indeed, a masterly performance.

Shepherd. Ay, and the key-note o' Shylock's revenge is again sounded when he declares that as Christians revenged themselves upon his nation, sae he wad better the instruction.

Tickler. Your interpretation of the Jew's motives differs from that of Schlegel and other Shakesperian critics; for in your view the desire to avenge the wrongs and indignities heaped upon his race is the principal motive, whereas they regard avarice as the mainspring of his actions. What ground Schlegel had for saying that in the eyes of the Jew a disinterested love of one's neighbour seems the most unrelenting persecution of his race, I know not.

North. He probably refers to the fact that Antonio, by lending money without interest, sapped the source of Shylock's gain, and this certainly appears to be the chief cause of his hatred towards Antonio.

"I hate him for he is a Christian :
But more, for that, in low simplicity,
 He lends out money gratis, and brings down
 The rate of usance here with us in Venice."

From these lines it is evident that avarice was the principal cause of the Jew's hatred, and in a subsequent passage the first ground of his complaint against Antonio is his having rated him about his "monies and usances."

Shepherd. Then Tickler and I are baith wrang ?

North. Partially so.

Tickler. Eh ?

North. In the play, the obstacle to Shylock's greed is made the chief ground of complaint against Antonio; but then we must remember that in the formation of the Jew's character, the principal circumstance which gave birth to his hatred of Christians had no relation to usury, but was the wrongs he had, in common with his race, suffered at their hands; and although Antonio's generosity was the immediate cause of Shylock's hatred, we should bear in mind and attach due weight and importance to those earlier influences to which were attributable the origin of his dislike to Christians. Shakespeare did not, as Gerwinus* suggests, give to Shylock a perception of his pariah condition merely for the purpose of preserving him from sinking quite below our interest, but because he realized the fact that the hindrances to his usances thrown in his path by Antonio would, apart from that perception, have been altogether insufficient to account for the pertinacity and cruel resoluteness which characterized Shylock's refusal to accept his "principal thrice paid." †

* *Commentaries*, p. 244.

† "Le juif est certainement coupable, quand il tire son couteau pour verser légalement le sang d'Antonio. Mais il ne faut pas oublier qu'il a été victime d'injustes et ignominieux traitements, et que la re-

(Enter AMBROSE with toasted cheese.)

Shepherd. We're a' pleased to welcome you again, Awmrose, for we're ready for the cheese. Neist time bring the toddy wi' you.

Ambrose. It will be here in a moment, sir.

Shepherd. Then dinna lose ony time in serving oot the cheese, Tickler.

North. I begin to have premonitions of nightmare.

Shepherd. And nae wunner, for at your time o' life Welsh-rabbits are dangerous.

North. By way of changing the subject, James, give us a song.

Shepherd. Sae I wull, gin Tickler will reach don the Cremona and play the accompaniment.

Tickler. What tune, James?

Shepherd. The sang will gae weel eneuch, I think, to "Bonnie Wee Thing."

[TICKLER takes down the fiddle and plays the accompaniment.]

SHEPHERD *sings.*

The hunter was sounding his horn,
The maid was milking the kye,
As I, a puir laddie forlorn,
Sat heaving a wechty sigh.

Wi' books and sic-like I'd striven
To drive foolish thochts away;
But I found they'd no be driven
Ony road but their ain that day.

sponsabilité de sa conduite retombe en partie sur ceux qui ont méconnu, en sa personne, la dignité humaine. Il a raison lorsqu'il revendique, contre ses oppresseurs, les droits d'une créature libre et raisonnable.' —*Shakspeare et ses Critiques*, par M. Mézières, p. 111.

So at last I shut up my book,
 And stroll'd across to the lea,
 Intending to tak just ae look
 At the maid sae dear to me.

She came wi' the pail on her head,
 As fair as a maid could be,
 And I vow'd I would soon be wed,
 Gin she'd pledge her loe to me.

When I mutter'd her name sae low,
 She blush'd—sure sign she was won ;
 Her face was like clouds all aglow
 When warm'd by the setting sun.

Then in words baith tender and true,
 I said she was dear to me,
 And her hand to my lips I drew—
 Then waited patiently.

Again the sweet answer I read
 In her een sae soft and blue ;
 But I waited till she had said—
 “ I am thine, thine ain loe true.”

The words we exchang'd were but few,
 As we came back o'er the lea ;
 But the flowers, thaigh bath'd in dew,
 Werna as happy as we.

North. Thanks to both of you. But here comes
 the toddy.

(Enter AMBROSE with a bowl of toddy.)

Shepherd. Singin' aye produces dryness in the
 thrapple, sae rax ower the ladle, Awmrose, and I'se
 fill the glasses.

*[The SHEPHERD, after filling one glass, drinks
 it off.]*

Tickler. What are you about, James ?

Shepherd. Dinna be in a hurry, Tickler. I'm thinkin that the flavour o' the lemon is a little too deceeded. Maybe, however, I'm mista'en.

[*He replenishes his glass and sips again.*]

North. Take your time, James, by all means.

Shepherd. It isna sae bad, after a'. Gae on wi' the conversation, gentlemen, if you please.

Tickler. Remember, James, that the ambrosia of Olympus grew by participation.

Shepherd. And yet I think there's a shade o' sweetness about it that requires rectifyin'.

North. The ladle, Mr. Hogg; the ladle!

Shepherd. Ou aye, tak the ladle.

[*He again replenishes his glass, and then hands the ladle to NORTH.*]

“ O whisky, soul o' plays an' pranks !
Accept a Bardie's gratefu' thanks ;
When wantin' thee, what tuneless cranks
Are my poor verses ! ”

Tickler. Poor, indeed! But what think you, James, of Professor Veitch's poems? *

Shepherd. What, him o' Glasgow?

Tickler. The same.

Shepherd. I thocht he was a feelosopher, and no a poet.

Tickler. He is both, for he has written a volume of excellent poems, the only objection to which is that they contain a high panegyric on your genius.

Shepherd. Then I howp they are guid, for ingratitude was never a faut o' mine. Hae ye read them, Mr. North?

* *The Tweed, and other Poems.*

North. Yes. He was kind enough to send me a presentation copy.

Shepherd. I maun borrow a copy and read them for mysel' gin ye are sae reticent. Are they lyrics or yepics?

North. The principal one is entitled *The Tweed*, the course of which is described, as well as the influence of its scenery on the life of the old Borderers.

Shepherd. The subject is, at least, weel chosen; and if the execution is equal to the theme, the poem maun deserve high praise. Is it in rhyme or blank verse?

North. The latter.

Shepherd. I'm sorry for that. But what says he o' the Shepherd?

North. He cites Leyden, yourself, and Scott as examples of what he terms the "modern outcome of old story and free nature—feeling in poetry."

Shepherd. Sae we are.

North. He speaks of you as the "fair-haired Shepherd, Nature's child," who

"Soared vision-wrapped 'mid high unearthly realms,
Lord of the world of awesome imagery."

Shepherd. Nae, no the lord, but the humble disciple in wham thocht and feelin' at times blend in harmonious unison, and to wham, maybe, is gien a glimpse, a partial insight, intil the realms o' poesy and sang. But gae on, sir.

North. He thus continues—

"Yet he would weave around unearthly scenes
A grace that binds them to our human heart :
Ideal forms, incarnate to the sense,

That ne'er had met the gaze of living men,
 Rose at his touch ; the light of sinless land
 Shone in her eyes, when fair Kilmeny came,
 Once back to earth, amid the gloamin' peace."

Shepherd. And dinna ye ca' that poetry ? But be it or be it not poetry, it discovers in its owther a true creetical faculty; for is it no true that in a' I hae penned I hae striven to bind thegither the fantastic and the real,—to guild wi' touches o' genuine feeling the bricht hues o' natur', and to draw frae her sombre aspects teachings o' truth and religious consolation ?

Tickler. God bless you, James !

Shepherd. But what o' the ithers ?

North. The ballads are excellent—the best of them being *The Lord of Oliver and Neidpath*. It has all the martial spirit and flowing rhythm of the old ballads.

"Wild glen of Fruid, and Oliver
 Set on the rocky steep,
 High Tinnies, massive Neidpath grey,
 Quaint relics of a long gone day,—
 What memories ye keep !"

The least meritorious is that entitled *Peden's Grave*, which does not flow harmoniously. The volume as a whole is, however, of great merit, notwithstanding minor defects which are here and there apparent—such, for instance, as the frequent repetition of the word "haughs" in *The Tweed*, in which, by-the-by, occurs an instance of plagiarism. The line to which I refer is this :—

"The lilt of lasses ere the dawn of day."

It is not strange that I should have remembered the

similar line in *The Flowers of the Forest*, which James once palmed off as one of his own.*

Shepherd. The line isna ainly similar, but amaist the verra same, for it runs thus :—

“Lasses a-lilting before the dawn of day.”

But I'm na ane to blame ony writer wi' committin' what was, we canna dout, an unintentional plagiarism ; for gin a man has a memory worth the name, he maun be led at times, unconsciously, intil reproducin' what he believes to be his ain, but which, in truth, belongs to anither.

Tickler. In the same manner, James, that you have—mistakenly, no doubt—drank twice out of my glass, your own being empty.

Shepherd. Weel, but that's verra strange. But, after a', Tickler, ye are better without the whusky, and sae I suppose it is what the lawyers ca' *damnum absque injuria*.

North. Tickler is probably of opinion that your offence would more properly come under what are called *exactio nefaria*.

Shepherd. I'm fearfu' he has been guilty o' waur than that, for what is that big flat thing I see in his pocket? Eh, Mr. Tickler?

Tickler. A volume of poems. Shall I read you a passage or two?

Shepherd. Gin it be a new poem, yes ; itherwise, na.

Tickler. It is fresh from the press, and opens thus :—

“Hail, Riviera ! hail, the mountain range
That guards from northern winds, and seasons' change,

* *Ante*, p. 170.

Yon southern spurs, descending fast to be
The sunlit capes along the tideless sea ;
Whose waters, azure as the sky above,
Reflect the glories of the scene they love !”

Shepherd. It promises weel, at a’ events, sae
read on.

Tickler. Here is a description of sunset :—

“Though still the air, and chill,—behold, behold
The hues of saffron deepening into gold ;
Save where a sapphire band on ocean’s bed
Along the far horizon lies outspread,
The heaving surface takes the tints on high,
And wakes its pallor to a kindred dye ;
A moment more, and from the dusky hill
The vapours fall, the lower glens to fill ;
Then fade from thence in many a changing shape,
To clasp the feet of every jutting cape ;
Till the tall cliffs’ descent into the sea
Is merged in mist, that makes them seem to be
Raised like the prows of galleys, that of yore
Stretched their proud beaks above the surges’ roar.
Another instant, and each doubtful shade
Melts and then vanishes, as though afraid
Of the great blaze, unbearable, the sun
Sends o’er the world, proclaiming Day begun.”

Shepherd. That’s verra guid. But what’s the
title ?

Tickler. *Guido and Lita.*

Shepherd. Then it’s the Marquis o’ Lorne’s ? Ye
maun lend it to me, for I’m verra prood to think he
inherits his father’s taste for leeterature. But what
say the creetics ?

North. Some of them have pooh-poohed the
poem, for no other reason, so far as I can discover,

than of its being the production of a scion of a noble house. This ought surely to have secured for it a favourable reception, for honest labour merits praise, and this recognition is especially due to one whose circumstances are apt to dull rather than to quicken literary aspirations. The poem possesses great merit: the story is interesting, the characters are clearly depicted, and the descriptions are truthful and graphic, whilst the versification is easy and graceful. I remember a passage which seems to me indicative of the author's possession of the poetic faculty. It is the one description of the heroine:—

“ Her form was strong and lithe. She came and made
A slight obeisance, as though half afraid ;
Then stood,—a coarse robe flowing to her feet,
Each limb *round shadowed* in the fitful heat.”

Shepherd. An' dinna ye ken wha's that is?

North. You are enigmatical, James.

Shepherd. What! hae you forgotten the *Queen's Wake*?—

“ Your cheeks outvie the dawning's glow,
Red shadow'd on a wreath of snow.”

North. I had not remarked the similarity, James.

Shepherd. Weel, it isna much, after a'. Pass ower the byuck, Tickler, for it seems to be weel got up. [*Looking at it.*] There are engravings in it, I see, as there should be in poems o' a descriptive character. Hoo muckle mair interestin', for instance, is *The Lady o' the Lake* whan illustrated wi' pictures o' Lochs Lomond and Katrine. I maun hae a copy o' this for ma leebrary, gin a few shelves fu' o' byucks may be sae ca'd.

North. Though few, your books are at least select.

Shepherd. I'm na gaun to grumble, sir, thaigh whan I bring to mind the hunders o' volumes—mony o' them presentation copies frae the owthers, or some high personage—which line the shelves at Abbotsford, I'll confess to a wee bit feelin' o' envy, twin-brither thaigh it be to hatred, malice, and a' uncharitableness. Puir Sir Walter! wi' what regret ane remembers the sad misfortunes that overtook him, an' yet hoo thankfu' should we be that he met them sae manfully, and conquered them sae heroically.

North. His biography presents one of the noblest examples of a brave life to be found in the whole range of literature. Alas! that we should know him no more.

Shepherd. Say rather that we shall know him for ever; for sae lang as his warks and the record o' his life remain, the ane will charm by their genie, whilst th' ither will fortify by its example.

Tickler. True, James; for e'en though his voice be

“— hushed on lake and fell,”

yet is his spirit ever breathing its own spell o'er the lochs and mountains of his native land, and travellers, as they view them, picture to themselves the interviews of the knight of Snowdown with fair Ellen; the cross of fire which

“— glanced like lightning up Strath-Ire;”

and the combat between Fitz-James and Roderick Dhu.

Shepherd. Luk hoo the full bricht moon lights up

the housetaps as with the licht o' day. Rapidly, and yet majestically, she skims thrae the gossamer clouds which hang about her like a bridal veil, dapplin' the sky wi' beauty. Ane should see lochs and mountains on sic a nicht as this, for however beautifu' in the sunlicht, or sublime in the tempest, they are maist enchantin' when lit up by the moon. Licht and shade contrast, at such times, sae harmoniously ; the ripple o' the waves seem sae like meltin' gleams o' licht ; the seelence that hovers ower natur' cawms the mind, befitin' it for contemplawtion and reflection, and opens the hairt to the reception o' thae finer feelings which the turmoil o' day is sae calculated to exclude. Let us, then, stroll hame, and think o' Dr. Johnson as he walked wi' freen' Boswell in the gardens o' Ashburne, repeatin', in his ain solemn and impressive way, Granger's *Ode to Solitude*.

North. You remind me, James, of a beautiful saying of Landor : "Truth steals upon the calm and meditative as Diana upon Endymion, indulgent in her chastity, encouraging a modest, and requiting a faithful, love."

Tickler. Let us then away, to enjoy "soft stillness and the night."

Shepherd. Come aláng.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

VII.

SCENE—*Blue Parlour. Time—Nine o'clock.*

NORTH, SHEPHERD, and jugs.

Shepherd. Hoo delichtfu' to contemplawte the mony eemages produced by the keckle o' the fire, and to feel the cheerin' warmth diffusin' itsel' ower the haill body, whilst dreamily regardin'

“The wee bit ingle blinkin' bonnily.”

North. Warmth is to the body what thought is to the mind.

Shepherd. It's amaist as pleasant as to lie streckit fu' length upon the sweet heather in simmer-time, listenin' to the saft murmur o' the mountain rill,—blind to, thae no unconscious o', the beauty o' the surroundin' scenery,—while thochts and feelings o' a tranquilizin' natur' breathe upon the sowl, as wind fans music frae an Eolean harp.

North. In summer, James, I often envy you the shades of the forest, or wish myself walking by your side over the moorland.

Shepherd. Talkin' a' the while, in your ain eeloquent way, about feelosophy and poetry, an' noos

and thans interspercin' your discourse wi' quotations frae Wudsworth or Howmer.

North. And not unfrequently from your own beautiful poems.

Shepherd. But why dinna ye come aftener to Ettrick, instead o' lingerin' in E'inbro'? Ye canna think what'n a fine fallow ma Jamie's grown.

North. I purposed giving you a surprise last autumn, but somehow I found myself at Elleray.

Shepherd. Just sae. Ye canna be content excepp you visit your ain pretty chatow* on Windermere, and raim ower the bonny hills, watchin' the variety o' hues that play upon their breists, frae the rosy tints o' mornin' to the golden rays of evenin'.

North. You must visit me there next summer, and we'll celebrate your visit by a regatta. The *Endeavour* is in capital condition just now, and would——

Shepherd. Na, I couldna think o' spoilin' the remembrance o' your regatta in honour o' Canning.

North. Ah, my dear Shepherd! that was indeed

“One of those heavenly days that cannot die.”

I scarcely know, however, whether the recollection of that happy time is more fraught with pleasure than with sadness; for are they not all gone!

Shepherd. Let us never forget, ma dear sir, that religion bids us rejoice at a' blessings, whether past or present, and maks the memory o' them

“A joy, a consolation, and a hope.”

North. God bless you, James!

* *Chatow* = chateau.

Shepherd. What's that? Dinna ye hear the creek o' a fut upo' the stairs? It's Tickler!

(*Enter TICKLER.*)

Hurraw! hurraw!

Tickler. Thank you, Jamie, for the welcome.

Shepherd. And hoo are ye, Mr. Tickler? But I needna ask, for ye luk, if possible, fresher than ever, and seem to gie auld age the gae-bye.

Tickler. I'm hearty, but——

Shepherd. Dry in the thrapple. Ring the bell, Mr. North, for mair Glenlivet. Ring the bell.

[*NORTH rings. Enter TABBIE with the whisky.* He kens our wuss without a word frae us. Noo then, Tickler, soop away at the whisky,

“Which cheers but no inebriates;”

for thaigh it's strang, it's mild as mither's milk. [*Hands the jug to TICKLER.*] Weel, Mr. North, did ye ever see sic a draucht as that! And what'n a grace was expressit i' the smack o' his lips! Rax ower the jug, Tickler, for I'm impatient to wheet ma parched mooth. [*TICKLER hands over the pitcher to him. The SHEPHERD drinks.*] Oh, man, but its hailsome! Will ye no pree't, Mr. North?

North. Hand it over, James!

[*NORTH empties it.*

Shepherd. What a lesson to a thochtless man! We ocht no to hae left him sae muckle, Tickler; for he's drank the hail.

Tickler. You mean the whisky, James.

North. Never mind, James; we'll have more in presently.

Shepherd. And sooper?

North. Is already ordered.

Shepherd. Hurraw! I feel in a tapsetowry at the thoct o' the towdies and the vivers.

Tickler. Look, North, at the poet's eye,

“In a fine phrensy rolling.”

North. James, James! If the spirit of the “brainless bigwig” could enter the room unseen——

Shepherd. Or fearfully visible, like the ghaist in *Hawmlet*.

North. ——what a tale he would unfold in the next number of the *Quarterly*!

Shepherd. I dinna care for the bigwigs; for we a' ken that our *Noctes* are delightfu' to oursels, and that we can mair than surpass ony o' our detractors in ocht. We'll discuss wi' them ony question o' feelosophy, theology, poetry, history, painting, manners, philology, or ither ology, and mak them confess themsels beaten; and admit that our conversation is lit up wi' thochts

“Mair bricht than madness and the dreams o' wine.”

Tickler. Landor * makes Æsop declare that modesty in man is perhaps the rarest and most difficult of virtues.

North. There can be no true communion unless the mind be unfettered by rules which, if observed, would reduce men to mere——

Shepherd. Sumphs; and would transform our *Noctes* intil dounricht maudlin, consisting o' remarks about the wather and sic-like tomfoolery, and poleet

* *Life and Works*, vol. ii. p. 17.

requests to be allod to question the justness o' ane anither's opinions, or to dout the correctness o' ilka's information. But what's this? [*Opens a book which lies upon the table.*]

North. Blackie's edition of the Bible.

Shepherd. And a fine edition o' the great Beuk it is. Just luk at this plate o' the fa' o' man. What a glorious prospeck o' green fields and wuddy uplands, and quiet bowers luxuriant wi' flowers o' a' kinds and colours, but nae dout a' harmoneezin, and giein' ane seelent invitations to repose aneath their bonny leaves, on which rests the bee, noo seelent as he sucks the delicious hinny, and then aff

“ — booming through the plats o' flowers.”

Luk, Tickler; is't no beautifu'?

Tickler. It is, indeed. It would make an admirable companion to Milton's description of Eden, in which

“ Cedar and pine and fir, and branching palm ”

present a

“ — woody theatre of statliest view.”

Shepherd. And hoo cawm the lake! Whilst the cascade, o' nature's handiwark, lets fa' its waters over the

“ — fringed bank with myrtle crown'd.”

North. James, you surprise me!

Shepherd. Just sae! Ye nicht imagine that nane but yersel' has ony memory; for whan I receet a few o' the mony hunder passages frae the poets, which are as familiar to me as ma ain thochts, you look sur-

prised, and stare wi' owpen een, as thaigh a fearsome faynomenon had depreeved you o' the poo'r o' speech.

North. James! James!

Shepherd. Is't na sae, Tickler? But what's the use o' axin' you, whan ane's as bad as t'other? Ye baith think that because ye hae read Wudsworth and the Latin poets, and aiblins spelt through the *Inferno*, you have a' the tawlent and learning i' the warld, and that I, the owther o' the *Queen's Wake*, which ye hae yoursel' praised, Mr. North, am but an ignorant coof. Noo let me tell ye, ance for a', that I've read and maybe understood—difficult thaigh it be—no ainly the Lake poets, but a' the grand poets o' England and Scotland—Milton and Shakspeer, and Burns and Allan Cunningham, and——

North. Have yourself written one of the finest poems which Scotland has produced.

Shepherd. Gie's your haun, sir; and rax ower the jug, Tickler, for wi' a' your fauts—and they arena few—ye are baith gude fallows. Sae let's drink ane anither's health in tumblers o' Glenlivet. Noo than!

[*Three tumblers are drained simultaneously.*

Hurraw! hurraw! hurraw!

Echo. Hurraw! hurraw! hurraw!

Tickler. Why, James——

Shepherd. Wheesht, Tickler! Didna ye hear it?

North. Hear what?

Shepherd. Surely ye're baith deaf. Listen! Hurraw! hurraw!

Echo. Hurraw! hurraw!

Shepherd. That simple soun' suggests to my mind mony tender recollections o' happy days passed upo'

the hills o' Ettrick, wi' no companion but Rover, and undisturbed by ony soun' excepp the bleet o' the bonny sheep, or the liling o' the laverlock as it mounted to its skiey observatory, or balanced itsel' i' mid-air, and became transfixed athort the braid expanse o' the lift, looking like the shadow o' an angel's wing.

Tickler (aside to NORTH). Not a very good comparison, eh ?

Shepherd. No gude! And what for is it no gude, Mr. Tickler? It maun be your ain incapacity to appreciate a correck eemage. If there be ocht that I detest mair than ordinar——

North (to TICKLER).—

“ Oh me ! what hast thou done ? ”

Shepherd. ——it is hypercriticism, in which no man o' taste or judgment will indulge, and to mak use o' which——

Tickler.—

“ Oh, speak to me no more !

These words, like daggers, enter in mine ears.

No more, sweet Jamie ! ”

Shepherd. Bee-the-bee, Tickler, that reminds me o' my freen ——'s byuck upo' the interpretation o' Shakspeer's plays, on the principal o' races.* Have ye read it, Mr. North ?

North. Yes.

Shepherd. An' what say ye to it ?

North. The argument is well sustained throughout the book, which is eloquent and scholarly. It

* *New Exegesis of Shakespeare.*

has, indeed, been praised by an able Frenchman, M. Mézières, as the boldest and most original of any that Great Britain has produced.*

Shepherd. But are ye convinced?

North. Scarcely, James; for his arguments, though weighty and stated with eloquence, are insufficient to nullify the opinion of Pope on the one hand, and of Dr. Johnson on the other.

Shepherd. And what say Pop and the Doctor?

North. The former contended that the excellence of Shakespeare consists in his admirable delineation of *individual* character; whilst the Doctor, on the contrary, maintained that the great dramatist's excellence lies in his correct portraiture of the *species*, and declared that "comedy was the instinct" of his genius, and "tragedy an effort of skill."

Shepherd. He maun surely hae forgotten *Hamlet* and *Macbeth*.

North. Guizot, however, asserts that tragedy, and not comedy, was the true forte of Shakespeare.

Shepherd. Then he maun hae forgotten the *Comedy o' Errors*. But aiblins this diversity o' opinion is reconcilable?

North. Scarcely. Your friend's interpretation goes to prove that the profundity of Shakespeare's genius is evidenced by the fact of his making Iago an Italian, Macbeth a Celt, Hamlet a Teuton, and Shylock a Hebrew; just as Rosenkrantz attributed great art to Goethe because he described Werther as a diplomatist.

Shepherd. And was't no sae?

* *Shakespeare: ses Œuvres et ses Critiques*, par Alfred Mézières. Preface, p. vii.

North. No. It was with Shakespeare as with Goethe, who represented Werther as a diplomatist because Jerusalem was such by profession; and Shakespeare made Hamlet a Teuton, and Macbeth a Celt, because they were such in the stories which he dramatized.

Shepherd. Hoo I like to hear you double up a new-fangled theory!

North. Not too quick, James. The author knows all this, but holds that it does not militate against his theory.

Shepherd. I'm gettin' bewildered amang it a'.

North. "The true poet," he says, "is a philosopher by sentiment and not by system."

Shepherd. Sae he is; and the lessons he teaches, thaigh vested in gorgeous language, adorned wi' metaphors, or fu' o' similitudes which attract by their beauty while they win by their truth, are yet the same as thae taught by feelosophy. But what are his arguments?

North. The lines of inquiry upon which he proceeds are four:—the mental, the moral, the physical, and the speculative or social phases of human character. He applies these tests to Iago—as Macaulay* had done before—as the type of the Romano-Italic race, the character of which he defines to be:—in intellect, a nullity of the organizing faculty, a feebleness of reflective capacity, a pre-eminence of sense, and of that concrete understanding which gains intensity by narrowness, and clearness by objectivity; in morals, external and formalistic; in manners,

* *Essay on Machiavelli.* The author of the *New Exegesis* appears to have been unaware of this fact, for he makes no reference to it.

courteous, but sly and secret ; and in the speculative or social aspect, patriotic, as distinct from both the personal and philanthropic opposites.

Shepherd (*yawning*). I howp ye arena gaen to discuss a' these yeds ?

North. No, James, I will not so far weary your patience. With reference to Iago's soliloquy commencing

“ And what's he then that says I play the villain ? ”

Mr. — says that Iago meant to vindicate a system of morality based upon external circumstances, irrespective of the *motive* which, with him, went for nothing. Now, this interpretation appears to me to be opposed to the early portion of the soliloquy, in which, according to my reading of it, Iago attempts to reconcile the advice which he had given to Cassio with his conscience, and with this view seeks to vindicate the advice by reference to its objective irreproachability. This consciousness—the want of which is necessary to your friend's argument—is shown by the lines occurring in the subsequent part of the soliloquy—

“ How am I then a villain,
To counsel Cassio to this parallel course,
Directly to his good ? Divinity of hell !
When devils will the blackest sins put on,
They do suggest at first with heavenly shows,
As I do now.”

Shepherd. Stap, sir, stap ! Gin ye'll promise me no to expawtiate again, I'll confess mysel' o' your opinion—whatever it may be ; for I dinna like sae muckle tauk about interpretations which ainly limit the genie o' an owther, instead o' allowin' its poo'r to

hae free course, and to move the hairt wi' indignation and putty, and lo'e and a' feelings, without ae thocht o' rules o' interpretation.

North. Look, James, Tickler is asleep.

Shepherd. And nae wonner. What a fizzionamy! Hoo perfect are a' his features excepp——

North. His proboscis.

Shepherd. Which is sma' as compared wi' yours. Luk hoo the smiles play upon his lips, and irrawdiate his countenance wi' a brichtness baith divine and human. Noo it's gane! Sunshine and darkness maun succeed each ither. See! he stirs. Keep seelent while I whisper in his ear. Wheesht! [*He steps on tiptoe to TICKLER, and shouts loudly in his ear.*] Tickler!

[*TICKLER springs wildly from his chair.*]

Shepherd. Haw, haw, haw! Did ye ever see sic a loup as that, Mr. North? It beats ony peeryette that was ever daunced.

North. It was, indeed, a Miltonic trip

“On the light fantastic toe.”

Tickler (bewildered). What—what means this? I'm almost——

Shepherd. Daft! And sae ye seem. But it was weel done, for a' that. Let it be a lesson to you for ever, Tickler; and as long as ye live, never doze again in our company, or maybe ye'll hae the nightmare again. That fearfu' loup o' Claude and Gertrude across the torrent was no mair terrible than Tickler's; for, like them, he sprang

“Like a fresh arrow from a new-strung bow!”

North. How come you, James, to be so familiar with *The Lady of La Garaye*?

Shepherd. Dinna ye know that I read a' the poetry, thaigh no a' the verses——

North. An admirable distinction.

Shepherd. ——that are published frae time to time?

Tickler. You surprise me, James.

Shepherd. If I dae, dunna confess it, Tickler, for surpraise is aften reckoned, thaigh unjustly, a sign o' a feeble understaunin'; but, for ma ain part, I think it safe to alloo ye to walk thrae the toon without a companion.

Tickler (with dignity). Really, North, Mr. Hogg forgets himself strangely at times.

Shepherd. Oh, but ye twa are deevilish ticklish, and canna thole bein' rigged ower by me.

North. Why, James, you certainly——

Shepherd. Wheesht, then; for I'll no discuss the question wi' you, for ye are baith

“Quick at a jest and smiling repartee.”

Tickler. The *Lady* again!

North. What think you of the poem, James?

Shepherd. Gin ye hae read it—as, in justice to you, I maun tak for granted—ye needna ask, for it's just ane o' the sweetest chords that hae been struck frae the Muse's harp this mony a year. It's unco' sad—as amaist a' true poetry is—for experience is fraucht wi' grief, and the best poetry is that which expresses our ain feelings.

Tickler. The same idea has been expressed by Milton, who said that he who would write heroic poems should make his whole life an heroic poem.

Shepherd. I pardon the interruption in consideration o' the respeck I hae for Milton. But, as I was about to observe, there is a solemn music in *The Laddy* that rolls ower the heart i' melancholy waves, and elevates and purifies the soul, making the Christian thankfu' for the howps which religion has implanted in his breist o' a futur', a better, and a brichter world.

North. And which enable him, my dear Shepherd, to look forward with rejoicing to

“ — the great change
When the freed soul, let loose at length to range,
Leaves the imprisoning and imprisoned clay,
And soars far out of reach of sorrow and decay.”

Tickler. Speaking of poetry, what think you, North, of Stewart's remarks respecting the growing richness of language?

Shepherd. What does Stewart say about it, Tickler?

Tickler. He says that, as polite literature advances, the charm of poetical diction must increase.

Shepherd. I'm thankfu' it's poetry, and no philology, we're gaen to discuss.

North. I think Stewart right in thinking that language gains in power and richness as literature advances, although Macaulay has somewhere expressed the opinion that language is best fitted for the purposes of the poet in its early and rudest state. There is, as Stewart observes, in every language a poetical, as distinguished from the prosaic, diction, and all good prose writers avoid it as too elevated for the latter kind of composition. It thus acquires and

retains a peculiar charm, and the very sound of words thus consecrated to poetry produces an agreeable impression independently of the ideas which they express.

Shepherd. Like music, which stirs the heart with emotions the most diverse, though why or how we cannot understand.

Tickler. Even granting that this poetical diction becomes richer as literature advances, still I think, with Macaulay,* that civilization is opposed to the poetic faculty.

Shepherd. I'll not believe 't.

Tickler. Well, but Guizot, in his *Life of Cornille*, has expressed the same opinion.†

North. De Quincey, however, speaks sneeringly of this theory, as implying "that the understanding and the imaginative faculty exist in insulation—neither borrowing nor lending; that they are strong at the expense of each other," etc., etc.‡ He holds that the *vis imaginatrix* of the mind is the true *fundus* from which the understanding draws; and he scorns the notion of the fancy having been made a part of our intellectual system simply for the sake of being resisted by the understanding.

Shepherd. What say ye to that, Mr. Tickler?

Tickler. I think De Quincey in error; for he might, as it seems to me, with equal justice urge that,

* See *Essay on Milton*.

† "Poetry, which derives its sustenance from solitary inspirations, may have lost a little of its free, original spirit in that frequent discussion of ideas and that daily interchange of mind, which are more conducive to the progress of reason than to the flights of imagination" (p. 122).

‡ *Suspira de Profundis*, p. 509.

inasmuch as man has both arms and legs, their uses must be identical, and that what strengthens the former must necessarily strengthen the latter also. It cannot, however, be denied that a disproportioned development of one limb acts prejudicially upon the others. The same remark applies to the intellectual faculties ; and as civilization tends to call into undue exercise the reason as distinguished from the imagination, whilst the converse of this holds in primitive times, I fail to grasp Mr. de Quincey's objection to the theory.

North. How, then, do you account for the absence of great examples of poetry in uncivilized ages ?

Tickler. I must first know what you mean by uncivilized. The Homeric age may, in comparison with this, be said to have been uncivilized, for it lacked the refinement and elegance which seem to us to constitute the essential principle of civilization.* Of course it would be folly in us to expect any great poetic excellence in savages : we might just as reasonably look to them for a high development of the logical faculty. It is surely beside the question to say that fancy and reason may be mutually serviceable ; for, without denying so obvious a truism, we may still hold that one mode of life and thought may conduce to the more rapid development of one capacity than of another. Mathematics, for instance, may, as Sir William Hamilton has remarked, be useful as fixing the habit of continuous attention, without tending to foster the creative power in man.† I still maintain,

* Dr. Johnson said, "It is in refinement and elegance that the civilized man differs from the savage."

† Stuart Mill was, however, of opinion that mathematics call forth

therefore, that civilization expands the reason at the expense of the imaginative faculties. Can we, indeed, explain upon any other hypothesis the slight effect produced by the recitation of poetry in modern times? Great as may be our admiration of Homer, it is difficult for us to realize the impression which, according to Plato, his poetry produced upon the Greek rhapsodists.

Shepherd. I howp ye dinna agree wi' Tickler, sir?

North. I do not, for his argument is based upon the assumption that imagination is a faculty distinct from, and indeed dissimilar to, reason. This assumption is, however, entirely gratuitous, and will not bear investigation. When you institute a comparison between our intellectual and physical powers with the view of inferring a like difference between the faculties as there is between the limbs, you fall into the error deprecated by Carlyle, of regarding the composed faculties as if they were things separable; whilst, in truth, "imagination, fancy, understanding, and so forth, are but different figures of the same power of insight, all indissolubly connected with each other, physiognomically related."* What, indeed, is reason but the faculty which enables us to infer analogies—to pass, in short, from the concrete to the abstract? And if this be so, then what is imagination but this same power applied to a wider domain—a domain in

and foster the inventive powers.—*Examination of Hamilton's Phil.*, p. 528. Novalis declared mathematics to be the life of the gods; and Pascal alleged that geometry excels in the art of discovering unknown truths.

* *The Hero as Poet*, p. 264.

which the coincidences are less apparent, because more complex and less coherent? It is thus, as Mr. Herbert Spencer has remarked,* that, "gaining greater freedom as it reaches the advanced stages of complexity and uniformity, thought acquires an excur-siveness such that, with the aid of slight suggestions—slight impulses from accidental circumstances—its highly composite states enter into combinations never before formed; and so there result conceptions which we call *original*."

Shepherd. I catch your meaning, sir; and Sooth-side maun retract his opinion, for I see that imagination and reason are eedential, save that the ane is far mair poo'rfu' and wider-reachin' than the ither; just as the eagle, thaigh able to soar aboon the highest peak and to luk wi' steady gâze upon the glarin' sunlight, is but a grander development o' the poo'rs which enable lesser birds to wing their flicht.

Tickler. I am by no means convinced. But what of the change of language?

North. The processes by which language is being continually modified are two, which are described by Professor Max Müller as dialectical regeneration and phonetic decay.

Shepherd (yawning). O—h!

North. And in proportion as the capacity for this change exists in a nation will be the advancement of its language. This capability is created, according to Müller, and this improvement is produced, by those vulgar dialects which flourish in such numbers in our own country, and which, though despised by the *litterateur*, will, in time, form part of the literary

* *Principles of Psychology*, vol. ii. p. 534, Second Edition.

language. But, notwithstanding this gradual change, there is, in every age, a poetical, as contradistinguished from the prosaic, diction.

Shepherd (starting up). Hae ye dune? Weel, then, I'm thankfu', for I am tired o' the discussion.

North. Give us a song, James, to enliven us.

Tickler. One of your own.

Shepherd. Sae I wull. Seelence!

SHEPHERD *sings.*

JENNIE MCGILL.

The sun had just set and gien place to the gloamin',
The purple o' sunset had died on the hill,
When I met a sweet lassie sadly bemoanin'
The loss o' her mither—the Mistress McGill.

I did a' I could to mak lightsome her sorrow,
By praisin' the virtues o' th' deid, which were—*nil*;
And hinted quite plainly that p'haps on the morrow
I micht meet the daughter o' Mistress McGill.

As sun as I'd said it, she eed me sae saftly,
And her een wi' sweet tears sae quickly did fill,
That I kiss'd her red lips, and sware maist daftly,
That I lo'ed nae ither than Jennie McGill.

But think no I regret my wauk thrae the green wudd,
Where the bracken and willows are lav'd by the rill;
For the warld has nae ither sae charmin' and gude,
As my wife, the sweet bairn o' Mistress McGill.

Tickler. Bravo!

North. A new one, eh, James?

Shepherd. I improveesed it.

North. Ah, my dear Shepherd! had I but a particle of your genius——

Shepherd. Na, na; genie's na that material to

alloo o' its being divided into atoms. But dinna be douncast, sir ; for, after a', you hae a poo'r o' mind that nae ither yeditor can reeval, and the possession o' which ocht to mak ye happy.

North. What is happiness ?

Tickler. Contentment.

“ Det vitam, det opes, æquum mi animum ipse parabo.”

Shepherd. Nae, Mr. Tickler ; happiness is surely mair than mere contentment, else the sumph micht enjoy the greatest degree o't. The highest happiness presupposes intellectual activity, and, aboon a', lo'e to God and man ; for thaigh happiness is nae dout enjoyed by the ignorant as weel's the learned, yet the greater that lo'e, and the mair developed that intelligence, and the mair endurin' and exquisite will that happiness be. The lad wha tends sheep upon the hills aften enjoys a degree o' felicity—and that no an inconsiderable ane—as he lies baskin' in the sunlight on a simmer's day, whistlin' as thaigh he wad reeval the lark as it soars aloft intil the blue expawanse o' the lift, tremblin' wi' an ecstasy o' delicht, and seemin' to be borne upon the waves o' melody to which it gies birth. But this is what ane micht ca' negative happiness, as distinguished frae the pleasure that springs frae lo'e o' Him wha made us, and frae that consciousness o' poo'r consequent upon ilka glympse intil the land o' thocht. And sae happiness becomes, in a great measure at least, independent o' outward circumstances ; and the greatest degree o't may hae been experienced by Milton and Bunyan, a'thaigh the anc was blind and too puir to merit persecution, whiles th' ither was locked up in Bedford gaol.

North. Plato was, perhaps, not far wrong when he identified the pleasurable with the good.

Tickler. To descend from particulars to personalities——

Shepherd. Tickler is the eemage o' contentment, wi' his legs—sae fearfu' in their length—streckit across the hearth like the remnants o' an antedeluvian animal, the remains o' which we nicht study, but could never understaun'.

North. From philosophy to legs!

Shepherd. And why no? Dusna a profoond feelosophy surroun' them in a' their varied forms—frae the lang and bony, to the curvelineal and the dat-an'-carry-ane?

Tickler. He, he! this is excellent fooling.

Shepherd. Gin we've the sceeance o' Phrenology, why shouldna we hae the sceeance o' Legs? If, as I hae heard, some physiologists mainteen that man's mental character depends in some degree on the variation in the calibre o' the cerebral and carotid trunks, why may it no equally depend on the formation o' his legs, the shape o' which is aften indicative o' the character o' their owner? Tak gooty anes, for instance.

North. Avoid personalities, James.

Shepherd. Arena they a true index to the mind?

Tickler. Ha, ha, ha!

Shepherd. And doesna the Ticklian or antique-gothic style o' architecture——

North. Haw, haw, haw!

Shepherd. ——reveal, at a glance, the characteristics o' the hale? And sae I mainteen that Burns nicht, wi' muckle truth, hae said——

“The leg's the standard o' the man.”

Let's tak Tickler, for example. His legs are as lang and as thin as Norwegian pines, and stamp their owner as a man o' an inquiring turn o' mind; for it's just impossible to escape frae them. Gin ye're at ae end o' the table and Tickler at the ither, ye're sure to bruise your ain legs by coming in contact wi' his. Their stability, too, denotes the firmness o' his resolution, while their elegance indicates the refinement o' his manners. But, no to pursue the eedentity between his intellectual and corporeal peculiarities too far, I'll say nae mair excepp that the want o' pliancy in his legs reveals the conservative bent o' his mind.

North. An admirable portrait, James.

Tickler. And what about North?

Shepherd. Weel, Mr. North's legs are also indicative o' his mental traits. They are weel proportioned,—strang, agile, but at times gouty. And sae we nicht conclude frae their organization that he is a man o' fine intellect and great enthusiasm, and that his thoughts are poo'rfu' and sparkling as a mountain torrent. At times, hooever, the native hue o' his mind seems changed; the rebound frae enthusiasm taks place, and that which erewhile was resplendent wi' the brichtness o' thought and the beauty o' poetry, settles doun into the gloamin' o' inactivity.

Tickler. Men not unfrequently judge character by noses, and I suppose it is as rational to make the legs the basis of opinion. You remember that Massinger puts these words into the mouth of Theodosius—

“ — here's a sharp frost,
In the tip of her nose, which, by the length, assures me
Of storms at midnight, if I fail to pay her
The tribute she expects.”

James, here's to your health!

Shepherd (to NORTH). Ring the bell, sir, for mair Glenlivet.

North (rings).—

“ Ho, Ambrose, hear the order !
 Sir David, clear the way !
 The Three will toast right joyously
 Till evening's chang'd to day.

“ To-night with strong Glenlivet
 We'll feast and toast them all—
 From Gurney, in the cupboard,
 To Gam, without the wall.”

(*Enter* AMBROSE and SIR DAVID GAM *with whisky*.)

North. Stand still, Sir David ! Here goes !

[NORTH *takes a spring with his crutch and alights upon* SIR DAVID'S *shoulders, from which he turns a somersault, and alights before* AMBROSE, *from whom he takes the whisky.*

Shepherd. Dinna luk afeard, Awmrose, for I sudna hae been surpresed gin he'd cleared no ainly you, but the hail o' us, ane after the ither. And noo for the toast, Tickler.

Tickler. To Hogg, the Theocritus of the North !

North. To the Ettrick Shepherd, the poet of the Forest !

Shepherd. Here's to mysel' ! [*The toast is drunk.*] But, ma dear sirs, dinna let it be known that I hae suggested a new feelosophy ; for gin it were to be rumoured that I'd done sae, I shouldna enjoy ae moment's rest, sic wad be the influx o' letters—mair like despatches than ordinar epistles—fu' o' sugges-

tions, and replete wi' deductions and analogies ta'en frae the personal experience or observation o' the writers. It wad be fearsome! The postman wad never be frae the door, and I should be driven till despair by the overpoorin' deluge o' abstruse speculations, suggestions o' supposed resemblances atween ma theory and that o' some auncient owther whose name I'd never heard, and creeticisms baith favourable and damning. Oh, Mr. North, but I wunner hoo ye bear up under the duties and anxieties o' yeditorship!

North. I often wish, James, that all aspirants to authorship were obliged, before committing their efforts to editors of magazines and reviews, to take the opinion of their literary friends.

Shepherd. Nay, sir, that wad be no criterion o' excellence, for I weel remember ance to hae heard o' a freen' o' mine reading ane o' my ain writings to a select pairty o' our mutual acquaintances, the result being that some o' the number drapp'd asleep, while the rest implored him to desist, wi' tears i' their een.*

North. Impossible, James. And yet it rarely happens that our friends are as enraptured with our compositions as was Richelieu with Colletet's Monologue.

Tickler. Talking of the pest of authors, reminds me of a passage in Moore's *Diary*, where he complains of being made the unwilling critic of aspirants to literary fame, and instances one who sent to him a "Serio-comic Drama of Invasion, in Three Acts, including the Vision and the Battle," and referred him for credentials as to his correspondent's poetical

* See the remarks on the "Criticism of Friends" in Disraeli's *Literary Character*.

talents to three admirals and the Comptroller of the Navy!

Shepherd. Haw, haw! It maun be that the pleasure o' seein' ane's name in prent owercomes a' ither considerations, for, as Byron says:—

“'Tis pleasant, sure, to see one's name in print—
A book's a book, although there's nothing in't.”

North. This craving for literary fame appears to be incident to a high state of civilization, for it was characteristic of the age of Pericles and of that of Augustus, as well as of our own. Nor is this strange; for in an illiterate age literature is but little appreciated, and only those who are actuated by strong impulses, either of duty or of genius, will write; whereas in more refined times the taste for literature is widely diffused, its honours become more real and attractive, and authorship becomes the favourite high-road to fame.

Tickler. And yet nothing is, perhaps, more mutable, for, as old Thomas Browne says, “the iniquity of oblivion blindly scattereth her poppy, and deals with the memory of men without distinction to merit of perpetuity.” How few of the many aspirants who throng the paths of literature attain the longed-for prize! Whilst authors may be counted by thousands, the really successful ones may be numbered by units; and even although no inconsiderable celebrity may reward the few, how often is it, even in their cases, but a fleeting renown—the fame of a few years, not the enduring one of ages. Literary fame, like the lake which once washed the sides of Olympus, may be attractive and apparently enduring, but it too

often disappears before revolutions in taste, as the Olympian lake retired before the convulsions of nature.

Shepherd. Tickler, why will ye no speak aftener? for I lo'e to hear ye drop out hints o' glorious meaning, fu' o' indications o' a refined and weel-stored mind. Ye hae brought to ma mind a glorious scene—the transformation which gave birth to the vale o' Tempe, which noo rests sae tranquilly and sae beautifully under the protecting heights o' Olympus and Ossa. It is strange, but at times the vera soun' o' some names gies rise to pleasant thochts and happy fancies; and sae the name of Tempe kindles ma imagination, and in a maement I see its glorious dale stretchin' far, far away, and hear the murmurings o' its ain Peneus, runnin' like a silver thread thrae the beautifu' diversity o' that enchantin' vale, and passin' wi' ae lang note o' music intil the arms o' the Gulf o' Salonica.

North. Happy man! to be thus able to realize beauties you have never seen, whilst, alas! too many cannot enter into the spirit of scenes with which they are familiar.

Shepherd. Weel, sir, and is't no natural that a sumph should be sumphish, nae matter whether it be in Greece or in Bedlam? The character o' the mind canna be changed by travel.

Tickler. True, James, for as Horace says—

“Cælum non animum mutant qui trans mare currunt.”

Shepherd. Travel may refine, and afford abundant pleasure to the man who has capacity to enjoy the scenes o' beauty wi' which this warld is blessed, but

it ainly maks mair stoopit the natural fule; for he believes that the virtue o' travel is in itsel', and no in the opportunities for observation which it affords. Instead, therefore, o' bein' profited, the sumph becomes the mair idiotic frae travel, because he assumes to himsel' a' the advantages it is believed to bestow, thus shewin'

“ How much a dunce that has been sent to roam
Excels a dunce that has been kept at home.”

Of a' the fules in the warld nane is sae stoopit as the travelled ane, for he becomes intolerably presumptuous, and consequently unendurable. Oh, sirs! but it maun be sadly aggravatin'—richt-doun cruelty, indeed—to be jostled by sic-like noodles while visitin' scenes like the Acropolis at Athens, the Colosseum at Rome, or the ruins o' Pompy,* and to hear the holy seelence disturbed by the guffaws o' an idiotic traveller wha canna understaun' that there are places in the universe where every stone is better than a sermon, and where every particle o' dust is a connectin' link between the present and the past.

Tickler. It is a common subject of complaint, James, with right-minded travellers, that wherever they are, and at whatever time, their presence is disturbed by the thoughtless and unappreciative tourist.

North. As Moore says—

“ If up the Simplon's path we wind,
Fancying we leave this world behind,
Such pleasant sounds salute one's ear
As—' Baddish news from 'Change, my dear—

* Pompeii.

The Funds—(pew, curse this ugly hill!)—
 Are low'ring fast—(what, higher still?)—
 And—(zooks, we're mounting up to heaven!)—
 Will soon be down to sixty-seven.'”

Shepherd. Listen, Mr. North! Dinna ye hear't?

North. Hear what?

Shepherd. I dinna ken, but it maun hae been a nightingale, sae sweet was the music o' thae few notes. It is verra strange, but the sang o' a bird maks me feel like a prisoner gin I'm in a toun, and I lang to rush away to the green hills, or to the borders o' Yarrow. I can weel understaun' why birds are sae dear to prisoners, for their sangs carry them back to lo'ed scenes and happier days, when they roamed at leisure, listening to the mavis or the lark, as it brake the stillness o' nature wi' sic delichtfu' music that seelence itsel' maun hae listened wi' enraptured ear, and hae blessed the tiny thing that could endow it with sae much melody.

Tickler. Byron introduces the visit of a bird in the *Prisoner of Chillon*, whom it melts to tears, and causes to forget for a moment his sad captivity.

North. But the return to consciousness is rendered the more agonizing by this fleeting interval of forgetfulness, for, as Dante says, nothing is sadder than to remember, in misery, past happiness.

“ — nessun maggior dolore,
 Che ricordarsi del tempo felice
 Nella miseria.”

Tickler. Richter thought just the contrary, for he counsels us to call up in such moments the memory of our brightest, as an antidote against moral depression.

Shepherd. Dinna ye hear it the noo?

North. It is indeed sweet "as music on the waters."

Shepherd. What a glorious run! Every soun', frae the first laigh note up to the last and croonin' ane in the treble, was mair melodious than a lute. [*He goes to the window, opens it, and looks out.*] What'n a burst o' melody! Oh, sirs! but this is delichtfu' indeed. Surely na ane wi' ony sowl could listen unmoved to the plaintiveness o' that last note, which seems to have rendered seelence mair affectin'. Noo it begins again, and is runnin' up the scale wi' the ease o' a perfeck artist.

[*TICKLER exchanges a nod with NORTH, and rings the bell, on tiptoe.*

How puir, in comparison wi' melody like this, are a' the strains which even the greatest singers can produce! These notes are

"—— far sweeter than the sounds
Which their poor skill could make."

[*AMBROSE enters silently with the Glenlivet.*
TICKLER and NORTH pledge each other in a caulker.

But it is dyin' awa', and becomin' ilka maement less distinct. And noo it's gane.

[*He closes the window and rejoins the others.*

Tickler. Music, my dear James, has indeed a power of——

Shepherd. Dinna talk to me o' music, Mr. Tickler, whan melody the maist touchin' that bird ever warbled couldna mak you postpone e'en for a few maements the order for whusky.

Tickler. What melody do you allude to, James? I certainly did not hear a bird singing.

Shepherd. There are ye deaf as a stoop.

North. Nor did I.

Shepherd. The deil tak sic havers. You couldna help hearin' 't.

Tickler. You have been dreaming, James; and to show that I am in earnest, I'll wager a caulker that no bird has been heard to sing in the street this evening.

Shepherd. I'se tak the bet.

North. Remember what Hudibras* says, and be warned against betting.

Shepherd. I dinna care what Hudibras says, for I'se tak the bet.

North. Then have you lost, James; for the melody which so charmed you proceeded, not from the downy throat of a member of the feathered tribe, but from a small pipe and a glass of water—the musician being a wandering instrumentalist whom Tickler and I met in the streets an hour ago.

Shepherd. Then, accordin' to your ain admission, I haena lost the bet, Tickler ha'in' bet upon a certainty. I wish, however, you hadna undeceived me, for the revelation has ta'en awa' a' the pleasure.

Tickler. Surely melody is sweet, James, however produced.

Shepherd. Sae it is; but somehow the pleasure it affords isna the same under a' circumstances. It maun be the association o' ideas that maks the difference to us. The singin' o' birds seems to trans-

* "I've heard old cunning stagers
Say, fools for arguments use wagers."

port us to scenes o' rural beauty, while the music o' a wanderin' instrumawntalist has a contrary effect. I hae aften noticed the operation o' the same principle in our estimate o' human character. Tak, for instance, the milk-lassies o' the forest and thae o' the city. What'n a different emotion they create! When I see ane i' Ettrick bearin' the pail upon her bonnetless head, and hear her singing as she gaes barefooted along, I canna but think her the personification o' health and innocence. It isna sae, however, wi' the toon milkmaids, a'thaigh they are, nae dout, just as blithe and innocent as thae in the forest.

Tickler. Akenside thus alludes to this principle—

“ — when the different images of things,
By chance combined, have struck the attentive soul
With deeper impulse, or, connected long,
Have drawn her frequent eye ; howe'er distinct
The external scenes, yet oft the ideas gain
From that conjunction an external tie,
And sympathy unbroken.”

North. It is undeniable that many of the impressions which we experience whilst contemplating certain scenes and objects, are the result of the operations of the mind, and that our sensations are often more referable to imagination than to the objects thus contemplated. If this were not true, the same objects would create similar impressions upon all men alike. Very often, however, the reverse of this is the case. Wordsworth appreciated this influence of the imagination upon our feelings, or he would never have written the well-known lines—

“ A primrose on the river's brim,
A simple primrose was to him,
And it was nothing more.”

Imagination alone could associate it with thoughts of purity, and make it emblematical of beauty and innocence. These additional attributes are the Ariels which only a Prospero can discover.

Tickler. So Jeffrey was right in his opinion, that beauty is not so much in the object itself, as in the eye of the beholder ; and that

“ Mind, mind alone
The living fountain in itself contains
Of beauteous and sublime.”

Shepherd. It's verra strange, but I never try to satisfy my ain mind as to the origin o' ideas or sentiments but I feel how unsatisfactory and unreliable are a' the solutions which feelosophers hae suggested. And sae as to this question o' association. A'thaigh at times I'm satisfied wi' its correctness, at ithers my faith in't is shaken by the suggestions of ma ain mind. Hoo, for instance, is it that the people regard the rose as the maist beautifu' o' flowers, and the primrose as an emblem o' purity? Were the mind, as ye say Jeffrey mainteens, the fountain o' beauty, this universal concurrence could not exist, for differently constituted minds wad entertain contrary opinions as to which is the maist beautifu' o' flowers, and which is the maist suggestive o' purity. And sae a' men agree as to the sublimity o' the sea, the beauty o' the Tweed, and the majesty o' Ben Nevis. Beauty maun, therefore, be inherent in objects, and its associations maun hae originated in them and not in oursel's.

North. Jeffrey's explanation that beauty is not an inherent quality of objects, but consists in the

power which they possess of recalling or reflecting pleasurable emotion, is open to the objection that it avoids, not meets, the difficulty ; for either beauty is inherent, or every object that causes pleasure may be called beautiful. Nor is it possible to attribute this power to the "accidental relations in which they may stand to our experience of pleasures or emotions," for this experience cannot be identical in all men, whereas all are agreed as to what is beautiful—unless the natural taste has become modified or changed by association or otherwise.

Shepherd. The qualification which ye tacked to the end o' that sentence saves you frae an obvious objection.

Tickler. You refer to the fact that all men are not agreed as to the beauty of many objects ?

Shepherd. Yes ; for is it no a fact that the Chinese idea of beauty is a broad face, high cheek-bones, very broad noses, and enormous ears ?

North. Jeffrey notices the fact that we regard "the richly and variegated countenance of a pimpled drunkard" with disgust, and adduces this as an argument against the intrinsicity of beauty. But the fact is that the natural impressions which the rich colouring of such a countenance would otherwise produce, are counteracted by our sense of the bestiality of the drunkard's character. Many of the errors connected with this subject have been caused by arguing from instances in which our natural sensations have been modified by counteracting influences. The only true method is to confine ourselves to objects the natural impressions produced by which have not been negatived by association of ideas. The heavens,

the earth, the ocean, the undulating landscape, the stars,—such are the objects from which we should derive instances, because with relation to them no antagonistic influences can have interfered with the natural emotions called forth by them.

Shepherd. Dinna stap, sir, for I'm amaist conscious o' your drift.

Tickler. Thunder, however, is indebted to this association of ideas.

North. No doubt the impression of sublimity caused by thunder is, as Jeffrey remarks, produced “not by any quality that is perceived by the ear, but altogether by the impression of power and danger that is necessarily made upon the mind whenever that sound is heard.” But to argue from this that objects are not intrinsically beautiful is scarcely logical.

Shepherd. He micht as weel say that because mony owthers think o' your crutch wi' terror, whilst they regard ither people's wi' indifference, therefore the wee bonny redbreast isna beautifu'.

North. Jeffrey also states that we admire a youthful face, not because of any intrinsic beauty, but on account of our associating it with youth, health, innocence, and intelligence; and he argues from this, that if it had been attached to the opposite qualities we should look upon it with aversion. The fallacy of this argument is demonstrated by the fact that we regard the cheek tinted with the hues of consumption as very beautiful, notwithstanding our knowledge of the disease which it conceals.

Shepherd. Oh, sir! that is true; and how sad to think that no a few o' the blythest and maist lo'eable

o' the female sax droop and dee under the blast o' th' insidious disease!

Tickler. If beauty consists of positive qualities, what are they?

Shepherd. That's the question.

North. It is, indeed, the question, and one that has puzzled thinkers from Plato to Kit North. Some have held beauty to be identical with the good and the useful; others with force, sympathy, and order; others with order and proportion; and others, again, with smoothness, smallness, delicacy, and colour.

Shepherd. And which is right?

North. I venture to say, none; for the inquiry has proceeded upon a false assumption. The course of such inquiry has been twofold—the metaphysical and the psychological. Those who have followed the former method have attempted to discover the principle of beauty by a comparison of different and, in some respects, dissimilar beautiful objects, and have by this means been led to believe that the characteristics common to these diversified things is the principle of beauty. Those who pursued the psychological method commenced with an examination of the phenomena produced upon human consciousness by objects of beauty, and then proceeded to inquire into the causes of such phenomena.

Shepherd. But didna you assert, no a maement sin', that baith were wrang?

North. I did, because such inquiry proceeded upon the assumption that an essential quality is common to all beautiful objects. Now, this is, as it seems to me, erroneous, for the word "beautiful" is a generic term which admits of a variety of significa-

tions, and denotes many objects possessing, so far as we know, no attribute in common. I am, indeed, inclined to agree with Poe's* remark, that when we speak of beauty we mean not a quality but an effect. The error of objectivizing general terms is noticeable in Plato, who, in the *Hippias Major*, makes Socrates persist in inquiring what is the quality the possession of which renders objects beautiful.

Tickler. The same is characteristic of Socrates in the Xenophontic *Memorabilia*.

North. Now, it seems to me that what is termed the beautiful is that quality inherent in objects which has the power of calling forth ideas of the true and the good. In this view association plays an important part in directing the trains of thought thus suggested in the beholder. I do not, however, believe that this quality is definable, for I hold it to be as various as are the differences which constitute man's individuality. The ideas called into activity by beauty depend, therefore, quite as much upon individual peculiarities as upon the nature of the qualities which serve to arouse them. The subject is, however, one upon which the most eminent writers have differed—no theory having yet been propounded which has met with general approval.

Tickler. I am probably mistaken, but it strikes me that you have committed the very error you censured in Plato, and that your theory is pretty much the same as Alison's.

Shepherd. Weel, if Plawto couldna solve the problem, it's nae use our attemptin' to do sae. Let us, then, leave the sphere o' feelosophy and, takin' a

* *Essay on the Philosophy of Composition.*

wider range, deellate upon life and manners; and if, as Pop says,

“The proper study of mankind is man,”

we maun turn our attention to the biped species wi’ a’ its peculiarities, baith individual and special. It has aften struck me that we may learn mair o’ the character of a man frae his eediosyncrasies—I’m thankfu’ I’m thrae that polysyllable—than frae ony o’ those qualities which, thae common to a’, are still sufficiently diversified to afford indications o’ individual character.

Tickler. The subject, James, is too extensive for classification, and consequently for discussion, for we could, at most, but amplify a few peculiarities that distinguish a small minority of humanity. Were I to attempt a simple division, I should borrow an illustration from Victor Hugo, and classify man into two great ranks,—the few heads which think, and the many mouths which speak.

Shepherd. Haw, haw! but ye’re satirical the nicht, Tickler.

North. The only possible classification of humanity is that made by nature—man and woman. And how one delights to dwell upon the tenderness and lovingkindness of woman, and upon the little weaknesses which only serve to endear her the more to us! Scott struck the right chord——

Shepherd. As he always did.

North. ——when he sung—

“O woman! in our hours of ease,
Uncertain, coy, and hard to please,

When pain and anguish wring the brow,
A ministering angel thou!”

Shepherd. I'm thinkin' o' being doctored by a female M.D. the neist time I'm ta'en ill. Women are sae gentle in a' their movements, and sae tender and considerate, that gin I'd a richt-doun bad influenza—and there's nae ailment mair trying to the temper o' man—an e that had depreeved me o' the po'or o' sicht, taste, and scent, I think naethin' wad be mair comfortin' than to be cuddled up in flannen and dosed wi' physic by a fair, gentle creature, whase ee is expressive o' a warld o' sympathetic tenderness, and whase verra touch is communicate o' ease.

Tickler. Jamie! Jamie!

Shepherd. Human bipeds o' the male sax are sae unfeelin'. Gin ye'd had your wisdom tooth extracted, as I hae, by a stoot, strang fellow, whase verra luk drave the pain awa' by a mair owerpoo'rin' agony, ye wadna address me in sic accents o' reproach. It's a' weel aneuch to put ane into a big easy chair as if the operation were to be ane o' the pleasantest, instead o' ane o' the maist painfu', character. But the torture begins the maement ye catch sight o' the nippers, which he'd quietly placed in the hearth to tak aff the chill. Then comes the tug, preceded by the insertion o' the operator's lang fingers intil the mooth, wi' the view o' ascertainin' the exact position o' the doomed tooth. But wha can describe the feelin' o' utter helplessness which comes ower the patient when the steel prongs become fixed, and the operawtor's airms encircle the head! I dinna remember whether Dante has depicted ony o' the sufferers in the nether warld undergaen the punishment o' teeth extraction, but if no, then he can never hae experienced th' ordeal himsel'.

Tickler. Ah, James! the relief is truly great when the cause of our suffering lies conquered before us.

“For there was never yet philosopher
That could endure the toothache patiently.”

North. I fear, however, that the tenderness of woman might be lessened by the influence of a medical education. At present they are to us what sweet Elaine was to Lancelot—

“Meeker than any child to a rough nurse.”

Pity he denied his love to one so beautiful and devoted!

Shepherd. And instead o’ bein’ an auld bachelor, wi’ a weakness for a widow——

North. James!

Shepherd. ——you wad hae been handed down to posterity as the happy father o’ a large family o’ Launcelots and Elaines.

Tickler. You forget, North, what Percy has told us in his *Reliques*,—namely, that in the earliest times it was customary among all the Gothic and Celtic nations for women, even of the highest rank, to exercise the art of surgery. But, gentlemen, the jug’s empty, though I’m dry as a volcano.

Shepherd. Weel, I’ll confess to bein’ well-nigh choked. Wha’ll do the needful?

North. The old man, James, is still good for a caulker.

[NORTH rings the bell. Enter and exit AMBROSE, who quickly reappears with toddy.

Shepherd. It’s verra comfortin’ to ane’s mind to

have twa freens wha are sae thankfu' for a' blessings,
whether temporal or speeritual.

North. Tut, tut, James! no punning.

Tickler. He stands fined in a caulker, or song.
Which is it to be, James?

Shepherd. I'll answer, wi' Festus—

"Mulcted in song, I hasten to discharge
The debt I owe, and pay it thus at large."

SHEPHERD *sings.*

I MET MY LO'E.

I met my lo'e i' th' morning,
When the flow'rs were bath'd wi' dew ;
I met my lo'e i' th' ev'ning—
My ain lo'e sweet an' true.

I met my lo'e at noontide,
When the sun shone forth wi' might ;
I met my lo'e i' th' gloamin',
Ere the stars peer'd clear and bright.

And whan we met and parted,
The selfsame sign was given—
A sign that aye felt to me
Like a foretaste of Heaven.

But noo we've lang been wedded,
And weans, like flowers, hae come,
To bless our lowly cottage
Wi' the fragrance o' their bloom.

North. Thank you, James ; and may you soon be
guilty of another pun. But hark!

[*The timepiece strikes twelve, and GURNEY
vanishes from the cupboard.*]

VIII.

SCENE—*The Snuggery.* Time—*Nine o'clock.*

Present—NORTH, TICKLER, and SHEPHERD.

Shepherd. Gin ye mean to assert, Tickler, that vanity's a sign o' genie, I maun contradict the remark, which wullna bear to be creetically examined—bein' fawse upon the verra face of it; and I maun express ma surpreeze that a person o' your judgment should entertain sic an opinion.

Tickler. Pardon me, James. I merely remarked that genius is frequently, nay, almost invariably, allied with vanity; and I challenge you to name a dozen men who are ranked amongst true geniuses in whom this failing has not been markedly manifested.

Shepherd. Weel, sin' you've challenged me to't, I'll name a few men o' genie wha hadna as muckle vanity as ordinar' folk. Tak, for instance, Bacon and Locke, and Shakspeer, Milton, and Wudsworth, no to mention th' auncient feelosophers and poets.

Tickler. Your examples are ill chosen, James; for, if I am not mistaken, Bacon gave expression to his vanity in his will, declaring that he left his name and memory to foreign nations and future ages; and as for the ancients, the merest tyro in history knows that

Cicero and Seneca, Epicurus and Euripides, sounded their own praise in language scarcely less presumptuous than that of Hippias, who declared himself familiar with everything in the whole range of the arts and sciences.

Shepherd. But what of Shakspeer and Milton, and Locke and Wudsworth?

Tickler. You forget, James, that Shakespeare promised eternal fame to Lord Southampton by the dedication of his sonnets to him.

North. The fact is, that what in others might properly be designated vanity, may in men of genius be but a just appreciation of their own powers.* Those powers are frequently unrecognized or but little appreciated, and it is not, therefore, surprising that their possessor should, under such circumstances, express the proud consciousness which must necessarily animate him, that the genius with which he is endowed raises him above the level of ordinary mortals, and secures to him an immortality the anticipation of which is to him the chief incentive to labour.

Shepherd. Just sae, sir. Na ane can be a genie without bein' aware o't, and this consciousness maun necessarily raise him, in his ain opinion, aboon those wha are less gifted. There are times in the lives o' men o' genie when, were it no for this prood consciousness, they wad sink intil despair,—times when,

* "Vanity, egotism, a strong sense of their own sufficiency, form another accusation against men of genius; but the complexion of self-praise must alter with the occasion; for the simplicity of truth may appear vanity, and the consciousness of superiority seem envy—to Mediocrity."—Disraeli's *Literary Character*, p. 162.

without it, the divine fire within wad assuredly be quenched, and its brichtness gie place to utter darkness, for lack o' the breath o' kindly creeticism or encouragement. Such a maement I experienced mysel' when I read the onslaught upon the *Queen's Wake* in the *Quarterly*.

North. A criticism, James, as unjust as it was discouraging.

Shepherd. But to say that Keats, for instance, was killed by an article, is to utter a calumny against the verra natur' o' genie.

Tickler. Were not Montesquieu, Batteux, the Abbé Cassagne, and others mentioned by the elder Disraeli vain to a degree?

Shepherd. I dinna ken ony o' them; but nae dout they were men o' talent ainly, and no men o' true genie, for genie maun, as Keats remarked, work out its ain salvation. And sae it did in his case; and his grand poem o' *Endymion* stands forth "a thing o' beauty" and "a joy for ever," and, like the early gloamin', "its loveliness increases," until the uncertain licht o' its advent brichtens into the glory o' the perfeck day.

North. The main characteristic of Keats' poetry is, perhaps, its keen appreciation and enjoyment of nature in its sensuous aspect. Every page of *Endymion* exhibits this extraordinary sensuousness. Take, for example, the description of the morning on which the goddess Mnemosyne discovered herself to Apollo:—

"The nightingale had ceased, and a few stars
Were lingering in the heavens, while the thrush
Began calm-throated. Throughout all the isle

There was no covert, no retired cave
Unhaunted by the murmurous noise of waves,
Though scarcely heard in many a green recess."

Shepherd. Hoo vividly these few lines impress us wi' the calm o' early mornin' upon the sea-shore! I can amaist hear the melody of the waves fa'in' murmuringly upo' ma ear, ere it passes into the recesses o' the caves which it haunts with music.

Tickler. The intellect of Keats was peculiarly subjective, whilst——

Shepherd. For gudeness' sake, Tickler, dinna gie us a dissertation upon the difference atween subjective and objective minds, for it is a topic as repulsive as the discussion o't is useless. Never mind analyzing the peculiarities o' intellects, but let us rest content wi' the treasures they have bequeathed to us—whether they are those o' a mind imbued wi' feelosophy, or o' ane mair gien to describing natural beauty than to profoond speculation.

North. The great obstacle to the favourable reception of a work is its originality, though this should be its highest claim to notice. The history of literature seems to prove that the most brilliant and important books are those which, on their first appearance, have met with the coldest reception. Take, for instance, the *Novum Organum* and *Paradise Lost*,* both of which were but little appreciated by the generations that witnessed their advent. This is, perhaps, attributable to the fact that genius anticipates—being ever in advance of the age it makes

* North has fallen into the common error of supposing that the reception of Milton's epic was cold, the fact being quite the reverse.—See Dr. Johnson's *Life of Milton*.

memorable and glorious, but which is unprepared for, and cannot, therefore, appreciate its revelations. The novelty of the inductive philosophy, and the moral grandeur of Milton's epic, required, like Montesquieu's *Esprit des Lois*, an age ripe enough to understand them.

Tickler. But poetry is surely as likely to be appreciated by one generation as by another.

North. Not when the poet happens, as in the case of Milton and Goethe,* to have outgrown his generation, nor when the poem happens to be opposed to the reigning school. The vivacity and sarcasm of *Absalom and Achitophel*, the quaintness of Cowley and Crawshaw, the licentious effusions of Rochester, Sedley, and Buckingham, had disqualified the national mind for appreciating the sublimity of Milton. It is not surprising that *Paradise Lost* should have been read only by a few in an age during which, in order to establish a reputation, poets were necessitated to pamper to the prevalent licentiousness. Nations, like individuals, must be educated into a capacity for enjoying what is truly admirable; for, as the despotism of the French monarchs had unfitted the nation for the enjoyment of true liberty, and caused the people to mistake the frantic license of the Reign of Terror for the freedom which alone can elevate and sanctify its possessors, so the prevalence of a particular style of poetry may render the public mind temporarily incapable of justly estimating a work which, though as extraordinary as that of Milton, is uncongenial to the public taste.

* This was in the middle of his life. He lived to see his works duly appreciated by the public.

Shepherd. Bee-the-bee, Mr. North, noo that ye hae referred to the French Revolution, may I ask your opinion as to the cause of it?

North. The causes, James, were numerous, and are to be found, not only in the despotism of the monarchs, and the pride and tyranny of the *noblesse*, but also in the literature of France.

Shepherd. Just explain a little mair distinctly, sir.

North. I refer to the writings of Corneille and Racine, which delighted the nation with delineations of Roman and Grecian heroism and virtue, and gave rise to the opinion that a republic was, of all governments, the one most calculated to promote liberty and virtue, an impression which was deepened by the *Esprit des Loïs* of Montesquieu. Rousseau, however, contributed most to the spread of the new opinions, by maintaining, contrary to the philosophy of Plato, that men were born with dispositions to goodness, and that all existing evils were caused by the tyranny of kings and the nobility the despotism of the priesthood, and the evils of civilization. This dissatisfaction with monarchy, and enmity of the priesthood, were strengthened by the writings of Voltaire and the Economists, and a belief in the natural virtue of man, and the uselessness and evil effects of the rites established by the Church. It is not, therefore, surprising that these feelings became popular throughout France.

Shepherd. Oh, sir! that maun hae prued a fearfu' doctrine to preach to an excitable people.

North. It did indeed; for it taught the nation to esteem the priesthood as the enemies not only of liberty, but even of virtue.

Shepherd. But didna the despotism under which France was suffering amaiist justify the Revolution?

North. No doubt the conduct of the *noblesse* in refusing reforms in 1783 rendered it inevitable, for those reforms were imperatively demanded by the times. The evils connected with the feudal system—which still existed in France—and the oppressive and arbitrary taxation to which the people were subjected, served to exasperate them against a government and an aristocracy which bowed them down with taxes, levied not so much for the necessities of the country as for the gratification of the pleasures of the great.

Shepherd. I'm thankfu', Mr. North, for the blessings we enjoy in this glorious laun'.

North. And yet Mirabeau and the other popular leaders could scarcely be expected to foresee the excesses to which the Revolution led.

Tickler. They might, had they remembered Homer's declaration—

“When civil broils prevail, the vilest soar to fame.”

North. Louis the Sixteenth was personally anxious to promote the welfare of his subjects, and, in order to conciliate them, called to his counsel successively Turgot, Necker, and Calonne, the popular favourites. Turgot and Necker were men of honest intentions and considerable capacity, but their endeavours to remedy the distressed state of the finances were thwarted by the nobility, who were interested in the maintenance of existing abuses. Nor was Calonne, though more brilliant but less honest, more successful than his predecessors. All plans for

limiting the national expenditure and equalizing the taxes were defeated by the aristocracy. Ultimately the States-General was assembled. At this time the public mind was deeply agitated. The populace had already burned the effigy of Brienne and attacked the military. Heavily pressed by taxes and irritated by the vexatious manner in which they were levied—exasperated by the partial and dilatory administration of justice, and angered at the national disgrace consequent upon the sacrifice of Holland and of Poland—the people were everywhere ready to rise up against rulers who had entailed upon them so many evils, and to sweep away a monarchy and an aristocracy which revelled in luxury whilst they were dying of famine, which silenced their demands for food and reform by imprisonment and the gallows.

Shepherd. Ye are waxin' warm, Mr. North. But arena ye contradictin' yoursel', sir? for hoo could ye tell me, as na dout ye did, that Louis was anxious to do richt by his subjecks, if, as ye hae this moment said, he seelenced their demands by the gallows?

North. The king, James, became but a puppet in the hands of the Polignacs, the Count d'Artois, and others of the nobility, and, acting upon their advice, he dismissed the popular minister, Necker, and despatched royal troops to Paris. These acts were quickly followed by the plunder of the Convent of St. Lazare and the taking of the Bastile. Nor did the execution of the king allay the fury of the Revolution, which passed into the hands of the despots of a terrible democracy.

Shepherd. Is it no strange that it should hae differed sae much frae our ain Revolution o' 1688?

North. It differed from our Revolution in that it was destructive, not defensive——

Tickler (aside to the SHEPHERD). A plagiarism from Macaulay.

Shepherd. Wheesht, Tickler!

North. ——that it descanted upon man's equality and the sovereignty of the people, not upon the venerability of the ancient constitution; that it sneered at, not revered, the past; that it fought for new rights, not contended for ancient ones; that it destroyed the *noblesse*, not acted with and respected them; that, during its continuance, doctrines hostile to religion and destructive to prosperity were proclaimed from the tribune and enforced with the sword; that license and tyranny, anarchy and bloodshed, were its characteristics, and that it left the nation a mournful spectacle of the evils of a destroying revolution when guided by men ambitious for power, thirsting for gain, craving for vengeance, and uncontrolled either by the principles of religion, the dictates of reason, or the experience of the past. Well will it be if future generations, profiting by the experience of those sanguinary years, shall, on the one hand, cease to withhold necessary reforms from the people, and, on the other, shall desist from the excitation of passions they cannot control, and shall refuse to enforce reforms by means similar to those which, in France, resulted in a Reign of Terror more odious than the tyranny of its ancient kings, more cruel than the loss of liberty itself.

Shepherd. I canna help pitying Louis and his queen, for their fate was a verra sad ane.

Tickler. It has often struck me, North, that the

character of Louis, and that of Charles the Seventh, as drawn by Schiller in *The Maid of Orleans*, are very similar. Urbanity of disposition, and unfittedness for the turbulent times in which they were cast, characterized both, and the words uttered by Charles exactly indicate the character of his successor :—

“Ich hätt’ ein friedlich Volk beglücken können ;
Ein wild empörtes kann ich nicht bezähmen.”

Shepherd (to NORTH). I’m thankfu’ ye werna a Frenchman livin’ in those revolutionary times, for ye wad hae outdone Robespierre himsel’. I can fancy ye being ane o’ the Committee o’ Public Salvation, stirrin’ up the people to frichtfu’ excesses by the poo’r o’ eloquence ; noo pronouncing eulogiums upon the liberawtors o’ France, and than descantin’ upon the virtue o’ the populace and the glories o’ the Revolution, in words mair stirrin’ than those o’ the orators of classic Greece or Rome. And noos and thans, when ye had extricated yersel’ frae a lengthy and impassioned sentence by a happy allusion to the virtues o’ Brutus or the tyranny o’ kings, there wad burst frae the crood a shout o’ applause mair loud and vehement than those which welcomed the declamations o’ Rienzi.

Tickler. Bravo, Jamie !

North. Never, my dear James, could I have so far forgotten my duty to my country as to have acted the part of a Robespierre or a Desmoulin.

(*A voice from the cupboard*).

“On sait que la vertue fut toujours votre appui.”

Shepherd. Oh, sirs, but is’t no fearsome till hear Gurney quoting French frae the cupboard ?

North. On the contrary, James, the acquisition of languages is a study which I am glad to think is reviving in our country, inasmuch as it enables one to appreciate the literature and character of other nations, and preserves to us that pride in the æsthetic capacities of our language which the Greeks, in consequence of their intellectual isolation, never felt for theirs.

Tickler. By-the-by, Gurney has only recently returned from the Continent, and may therefore be pardoned his quotation.

Shepherd. I canna think sae, Tickler; for to ma mind there's nae many folks wha receive good frae travellin'. Nooadays people gae to ither kintras mair for the fashion o' the thing than to gain information, and when they return they are continually enquirin' whether you've been to th' Continent, and makin' foolish creetishisms upon the galleries o' Dresden, or Paris, or Rome, of which they ken as muckle as th' auncient maisters ken o' them.

North. But we must not forget that the contemplation of the beautiful insensibly elevates and refines the sentiments.

Shepherd. Gin they want to elevate and refine what ye ca' the sentiments, what mair enoblin' than the scenery and associations o' Scotland? Let them first, by lang study and observation, become familiar wi' the beauties o' their ain laun' before they rush to foreign pairts in order to weary their acquaintances wi' descriptions stawn frae Murry. Let them roam thrae the Highlands and by the streams o' Yarrow, and let the profoond stillness and wild sublimity o' Lochs Lomond, Katrine, and Maree sink deep intil

their hairt o' hairts, before they venture to mak comparisons unfavourable to the scenery o' their native land.

North. The fault, James, is at least not peculiar to modern times, for we find Pliny making a similar complaint against his countrymen.

Tickler. We have, however, in our uncertain climate, an excuse which the Romans had not.

Shepherd. Dinna say ocht against the cleemate, Tickler, for I couldna exist gin it were ither than it is. Do ye mean to compare a soothern sky wi' our ain? To ma mind an interminable expawmse o' blue isna as beautifu' as our cloud-bedecked horizon. The ane is unchangeable, but the ither is ever varying—noo interspersed wi' piles o' fleecy towers, and than streckit wi' thin silvery ripples. The ane is emblematic o' intense and continued heat, but the ither, like the ocean, is

“An emblem o' eternal change.”

Tickler. We may say of Scotland, as Homer said of Ithaca—

“Tis rough indeed, but breeds a generous race.”

North. James reminds me of one of Byron's early poems, in which he exclaims—

“Yet, Caledonia, beloved are thy mountains,
Round their white summits though elements war;
Though cataracts foam 'stead of smooth-flowing fountains,
I sigh for the valley of dark Loch-na-Garr.”

Shepherd. And I honour Byron for the wush. If he hadna, in his younger days, been in intimate communion wi' the glorious mountains and lakes o'

Scotland, we should hae last mony o' the beautifu' eemages which abound i' his poems. Ideas and eemages arena always the things o' a moment, but aften the growth o' years ; for thochts which hae, perchance, flashed thrae the mind i' younger days, and vanished ere their presence or meaning could be realized, no unfrequently recross the mind in after years with a vividness which enables us to mak them our ain, and to augment the debt o' gratitude which future ages maun owe to the present, by enriching leeterature wi' new and graveless thochts.

Tickler. The idea and expression, James, are alike original.

Shepherd. Dinna say sae, Tickler ; for after what Mr. North has said about originality, I'm amaist afeard to gie expression to ony but the maist ordinar' ideas, lest they shouldna be appreciated until the hieroglyphics o' Gurney hae become as historical as the *Deery* o' Pepys. Bee-the-bee, Mr. North, did ye gae till hear the lecture upon Pepys and his *Deery* ?

North. No, James, I did not ; for lectures have become so common, and the charge for admission, in many cases, so high, that, like Socrates, I must be content, for very penury, to miss the lectures of our modern Prodicuses.

Shepherd. Oh, ye miser ! A freen o' mine gave me a ticket, sae I just drapp'd in, but didna stay lang, being amaist overpoor'd by the notice ma presence attracted.

Tickler. Ah, Jamie, genius need not yet despair, for is it not, in your case, ever

“The cynosure of neighbouring eyes?”

Shepherd. Weel, weel, Tickler, I'm nae complaining, except o' the lecturer, who, instead o' illustrating the life and mainners o' the time o' Pepys by references to his Deery, occupied the time o' his audience by bits o' sarcasms intended to be lauchable, but which were simply despicable; and by extracts which could be o' nae possible interest, except as illustrating the weaknesses o' the owther, about wham, in his private capacity, naebody feels much curiosity. To' occupy folks' time by the perusal o' extracts which ony ane can read for himsel', instead o' describin' the life and mainners, and glancin' at the questions which agitated the public mind in Pepys' days, isna ainly to pay a bad compliment to those present, but to' abuse the verra ends and purposes o' lecturin', by substitutin' tomfoolery for instruction.

North. Your remarks, James, though severe, are not altogether unjust. The fault is not, however, to be attributed wholly to lecturers. If audiences prefer, as in most instances they do, amusement to instruction, we can scarcely blame lecturers for gratifying them. If, however, I understand aright——

Shepherd. As nae ane will venture to dout.

North. ——the true purpose of lecturing is to convey, in an interesting and popular form, information which the majority of people have either not the time or the inclination to attain by reading; to disseminate truths which otherwise might not gain credence or popularity, and, on the other hand, to expose errors which, from various causes, may have become implanted in the popular mind. To substitute sarcasm for instruction, like Diogenes, or to affect a saucy roughness, like Shakespeare's Duke of Kent, is to

pervert the true functions of a popular teacher—the popularizing of knowledge.

Tickler. For my part, North, I don't think this popularizing of knowledge effects much good, for its tendency must be to render information superficial. Our popular lecturers, like the masters described by Juvenal——

Shepherd (interrupting). What sae ye, Mr. North?

North. I agree with Tickler——

Shepherd. That lectures arena o' much use?

North. No; you misunderstand me. What I meant to convey is, that lectures and similar means of education tend, as Tickler has said, to make knowledge superficial. But, although this is an evil, it is not as great as the one it tends to destroy, for knowledge, however discursive and superficial, is preferable to ignorance; and as lecturing can only produce the former, where it removes the latter of these evils, it follows that its tendency is beneficial, and therefore commendable.

Shepherd. Gin Tickler admits your premises, sir, he canna verra weel dout your conclusion.

North. Nor are lectures and other means of popular education limited in their operation and effect to the classes immediately benefited by them. On the contrary, they affect the upper classes, who, if they would preserve their superiority, must make their intellectual growth commensurate with that of the middle and lower classes, wealth being unable to contend against intelligence for superiority.

Shepherd. Gae on, sir.

North. But popular education, besides infusing into the people a taste for literature, strikes a death-

blow to the curse of our land. The intemperance and vicious tastes which prevailed in England during the last century were attributable to the neglect of education which obtained not only amongst the people generally, but even in the universities whence proceeded the men who, as pastors, were to become the expounders of the Gospel, and the influence of whose lives and conduct was to advance or retard, to an incalculable degree, the progress of the nation in virtue and religion.

Shepherd. Gae on, sir.

North. And what was the effect of this neglect?

Shepherd. I canna say.

North. Intemperance and gaming prevailed to a fearful extent; the ordinances of religion were unobserved; want of moral refinement was the characteristic not only of the country squires, but even of ladies; the immoralities of *Tom Jones* and other novels of a similar character* delighted the lax morality of the more educated, whilst buffoonery and superstition disgraced the lower ranks.

Shepherd. Gae on, sir.

North. If, then, these evils sprang from the neglect of education, the cultivation of the intellect of the people must destroy them——

Shepherd. Wham, sir? Surely no the people!

North. ——and substitute refinement of manners, ennobling tastes, a moral literature, and a respect for religion, in the place of those immoralities and vicious tastes which disgraced the last century.

Shepherd. Gin what ye say be true, sir, the aspeck o' the kintra maun hae been verra different in thae

* See Forsyth's *Novels and Novelists of the Eighteenth Century*.

times, when buffoonery an' intemperance an' a' the vices caractereezed the people. And gin this great change is to be attributed—a'thaigh but in pairt—to the influence o' education, I'm thankfu' for the many institutions o' an educational character which abound in Scotland and in England. I rejoice, too, to think o' the heavenly peace and repose which reigns throughout the laun' o' the Sabbath day—the day upon which the hum o' industry is seelenced, and on which the cawn mornin' is welcomed by the peal o' the kirk bells. But, sir, the presence o' that day o' rest canna be so weel felt i' touns as on the hills or in the green valleys, where all natur' seems to be imbued wi' the holiness o' the day, and the verra trees seem to wave mair composedly, sending forth a tender murmur no unlike the sighings o' an Eolian harp, made musical by the kisses o' the passin' breeze.

North. Go on, sir.

Shepherd. And as the hoor o' service approaches, hoo delichtfu' to watch the folks wending their way to the kirk, and hoo comforting to hear the untutored, thaigh no unmusical,

“—— voice o' psalms, the simple song o' praise.”

North. God bless you, James!

Shepherd. But no pretentious or long sermon does the minister deliver, but a short and simple and touchin' ane—ane that comforts whilst it admonishes, and prepares the hait for thae precious and divine truths which the grand Byuck teaches. And whan the service is ower, the pastor and his flock greet ane anither in the kirkyard wi' a smile and hearty shak o' the haun' which are remembered for mony a day.

North. Why don't you immortalize the scene which you have just described, by putting it into verse worthy to go side by side with the "Cottar's Saturday Night"?

Shepherd. Aiblins I may mak th' attempt ane o' these days; but I'm amaist afeard to do sae, lest I should be thocht to challenge comparison wi' Burns, wham nae man in his richt senses wad seek to reeval.

North. But, James——

Shepherd. Oh, sir! be seelent ae maement while I coom Tickler, wha's drapp'd asleep. There! sure nae mair perfect crescent was ever drawn frae nose till ear. And noo for the ither side, and the eebrees.

North. Why, James, I declare that's more perfect than the first.

Shepherd. Wheesht, sir! lest ye wake him frae his drawm. [*The SHEPHERD continues to draw certain hieroglyphics on TICKLER'S face.*] Oh, sir! what'n a terrible king o' the South Sea Islands he wad make; and what a sensation he wad produce amang the coloured female population whan he stalked before them in *puris naturalibus*! Satan himsel' couldna be a greater deil amang the lasses than he, gin he were to appear amang them in a' the fearfu' majesty o'

"His legs sae lang and stark."

North. He resembles the ancient Harlequin with his sooty face, *fuligine faciem obducti*.*

Shepherd. Wheesht! I say, or ye'll wake him. See! he's moving. [*Whispers.*] Luk! he's rubbin' his een, sae we'd better continue the conversation. [*Aloud.*] But, sir, the auncient antagonism between the twa

* See *Curiosities of Literature*, vol. ii. p. 121.

kintras maun, I jalouse, produce a speedy and feenal separation.

Tickler (*joining in the conversation*). Then you agree with Schiller, James, that—

“ — Französich Blut

Und englisch kann sich redlich nie vermischen.”

North. He, he, he!

Shepherd. Haw, haw, haw!

Tickler (*perplexed*). Explain yourselves, gentlemen.

Shepherd (*making an effort to suppress his laughter*). Nae dout, Tickler, nae dout, for—haw, haw, haw!

Tickler. Really, gentlemen, I can discover no cause for this hilarity—unless, indeed [*starting up*], an ungentlemanly advantage has been taken of my momentary forgetfulness. [*Glances at himself in the mirror.*] North! I should have thought that you, at least, were above the perpetration of so indecorous an act.

Shepherd. Tut, tut, Mr. Tickler! and why no me, pray? Gin ye mean to insinuate that ma mainners arena as gude as your ain, let me tell you that I repel the reflection upon ma poleeteness wi' a' the—— Haw, haw, haw! Gie me your haun, sir, and let us be reconciled, for I canna help lauchin' at your appearance.

Tickler. Practical joking, James, is as devoid of real humour as it is derogatory to the self-respect of him who practises it.

“ I love a friend,

So long as he continues in the bounds
Prescribed by friendship ; but—— ”

Shepherd. Weel, weel, say nae mair about it,
Tickler, but gae and wash yersel' while I sing a bal-
lant to Mr. North.

[*Exit* TICKLER, *who soon afterwards reappears.*

SHEPHERD *sings.*

By Yarrow's stream and Newark's tower,
There oft is heard, at midnight hour,
A fearsome sound ;
Not like the tone o' earthly lay,
Nor yet resembling the bay
O' death's grim hound.

As Tam was gaen hame ane night
Drunk as himsel'—as weel he might,
Wi' sae much beer—
He shouted, whistled, and then sang,
Till wi' the noise the valley rang
Sae shrill and clear,

That Tam forgot the sound that ever
Is heard aboon sweet Yarrow's river
At dead o' night.
But, as he pass'd proud Newark's wa's,
The moon peep'd out wi' shimmerin' rays
And silvery light.

Tam ceased to sing, and felt nae mair
As he had felt, before the glare
O' th' queen o' night
Had chas'd the darkness frae the scene,
Revealin' to his half-shut een
A fearsome sight.

Upon the dial's aged face
 Puir Tam, quite fou', thocht he could trace
 The hour o' twal.
 And hark ! a shriek rises aboon
 The crumblin' towers. Puir Tam's strang shoon
 Beat quick wi' fear.

Tam heard the sound again and sunk,
 Down on his knees ; and, thae quite drunk,
 Mutter'd a prayer,
 And ask'd forgiveness for the past,
 Promising to reform at last,
 And drink nae mair.

Had Tam then gone straight aff to bed,
 He'd sure hae lauch'd at what he'd said
 At that lone hour.
 But lo ! before puir Tam could rise,
 A vision dawn'd upon his eyes
 Wi' frichtenin' power.

Tam bellow'd out anither prayer,
 Declar'd he'd gae to th' inn nae mair,
 Wi' God's good grace.
 The ghaist was tickl'd and guffaw'd,
 And lang and loud Haw-haw-haw-haw'd
 Before Tam's face.

"Ye arena, then, a ghaist !" cried Tam.
 "By Dad ! but sure and that I am,"
 Replied the ghaist.
 "And gin ye mane to dout my natur',
 I'll spoil the looks o' every fatur,
 Ye dirty baist !"

which would be as undignified as its utterance was foolish and impoleete.

North. Severe, James!

Shepherd. For if, as Mr. North hae remarked, the cultivation o' the mind refines the mainners, the conclusion to be drawn frae an interruption sae uncourteous is onything but flatterin' to the capacity o' Soothside.

Tickler. This comes of reading Macaulay.

Shepherd. Maybe it does, Tickler; and that no ainly the mainner, but the verra speerit, o' his writings hae impressed me sae vividly, as to mak it less difficult to eemitate him than to escape frae the influence o' his genie. And oh, Mr. North! muckle as ye ance wrote agin him, ye canna hae read his various warks without recognizing and admirin' the justness o' his thochts, and the elegance wi' which he expressed them, or without payin' a tribute to thae brilliant criticisms which startled and maun for ever captivate the literary world.

North. I yield to none in admiration of his character and talents.

Shepherd. I'm unco' glad to hear't, sir; for I canna help lovin', as weel's admirin', the owther o' that glorious article on Milton, in which the enthusiasm o' youth and the wisdom o' manhood sae beautifully unite.

Tickler. What about his *Lays*, James?

Shepherd. I canna help thinkin' them beautifu'. I weel remember the nicht when I read the *Lay o' Horatius*, and the joy which it kindled i' ma hairt. Sic was the poo'r that it produced upo' me, that I had nae sooner read it than I began the neist ane, the

Battle o' Lake Regillus; and had it no been for the weans, I should, on readin' the verra first verse, hae shouldered a crutch, like Goldsmith's veteran, and rushed intil the middle o' the floor, shoutin'—

“ Ho, trumpets, sound a war-note !
 Ho, lictors, clear the way !
 The Knights will ride, in all their pride,
 Along the streets to-day.
 To-day the doors and windows
 Are hung with garlands all—
 From Castor, in the Forum,
 To Mars, without the wall.”

North. He rivals Scott on his own ground, for even his description of the battle, in *Marmion*, which Gilfillan says has no modern competitor in Homeric vigour, does not surpass the graphicness and power of the *Battle of Lake Regillus*.

Shepherd. Mr. Tickler, alloo me to reach the Cremona doun and beg o' you to favour us wi' a specimen o' your genie.

Tickler. What shall it be, James ?

Shepherd. When a' are beautifu', it's difficult to choose ; but let it be “ John Anderson, my Jo.”

[TICKLER *plays the air amid profound silence.*

Shepherd. Oh, sir ! but ye are a perfeck master o' the fiddle, and ane canna judge o' the poo'r o' music until they hae heard ye play ane o' our grand Scotch melodies—sae beautifu' i' their simplicity, and far mair touchin' than a' the warks o' the greatest composers, no exceptin' Batehoven or Mowsart.

Tickler. Thank you, James.

North. You had better not express such a pre-

ference in the presence of our friend the opium-eater.

Shepherd. And why no, sir ?

North. Because he maintains that it springs from the want of culture of the musical taste.

Shepherd. Do ye mean to say, Mr. North, that Mr. de Quinshy had mainteen that opinion ?

North. Just reach me that blue volume behind you, James, and I'll read to you the passage in which he asserts that the preference for simple airs arises from want of culture.

Shepherd (handing the volume to NORTH). Gin he does, we maun use the crutch till him.

North. Here is the passage. After referring to the fact that a man will deliberately express his preference of a song to the most elaborate music of Mozart, he exclaims, "Strange that the analogy of other arts should not open his eyes to the delusion he is encouraging ! A song, an air, a tune ; that is, a short succession of notes revolving rapidly upon itself, how could that, by possibility, offer a field of compass sufficient for the development of great musical effects ? . . . A hunting-box, a park-lodge, may have a forest grace and the beauty of appropriateness ; but what if a man should match such a bauble against the Pantheon, or against the minsters of York and Cologne ? A repartee may by accident be practically effective : it has been known to crush a party scheme—but what judgment would match the two against each other as developments of power ? Let him who finds the maximum of his musical gratification in a song, be assured, by that one fact, that his sensibility is rude and undeveloped."

Shepherd. Noo, sir, muckle as I respect Mr. De Quinshy, I canna wunner that he hasna seen the defeck in his argument; for he seems to hae based it upon a supposed similarity between leeterature and music. But the latter appeals to the feelings, whilst the former (exceptin' poetry) appeals amaist solely to the reason, and ony argument founded upon a supposed resemblance o' effectks, whan such resemblance dusna exist, rests

“Upon the baseless fabric o' a dream.”

Tickler. But is there not, James, an inseparable connection between the mind and the feelings?

Shepherd. Gin ye mean to assert that thocht and feelin' are seenonymous terms, I maun gie up my ain consciousness as weel's ma argument.

North. Although thought and feeling differ, yet are they interdependent, and only different modes of the same mind. Rousseau says that melodies do not affect us simply as sounds, but as representations of our affections and sentiments.*

Shepherd. Weel, thae I admit what ye contend for, I dunna see that it injures my argument; for, according to your ain statement, the feelings, thae resultin' frae the operations o' the mind, maun nevertheless be distinct from, though no independent of it, just as cause an' effectk arena eedential. And sae I contend that leeterature appeals to the mind in such a manner as no to produce those operations and effectks

* “Les sons dans la mélodie, n'agissent pas seulement sur nous comme sons, mais comme signes de nos affections, de nos sentimens; c'est ainsi qu'ils excitent en nous les mouvemens qu'ils expriment, et dont nous y reconnoissons l'image.”—*Essai sur l'Origine des Langues*, ch. 15.

which we ca' emotion or feeling. Dinna ye admit that, sir?

North. Eh?

Shepherd. Noo, there is a class o' leeterature—and it is o' this class to which I referred—which produces what Locke ca's conceptions, as contradistinguished frae sentiments.

Tickler. But surely poetry and fiction operate upon the feelings?

Shepherd. Just sae; and therefore I excepted poetry at the commencement, in speakin' o' leeterature. The twa—music and poetry—are inseparable, and gae haun' in haun' thegither, like twin-sisters. Oh, sirs! but I hae aften seen them flittin' joyously upo' the hills o' Ettrick, vying wi' each ither in beauty and expression, but each ane addin' to the attractiveness o' her companion. And sae I hae watched them—Euterpe and Erawto—noo boundin' ower the heather wi' joyous steps, revivifying, by the melody and the tenderness o' their blended vices,* the yellow bells which they had bent beneath the pressure o' their tread; and at ither times threadin' their course, wi' pensive brows, thrae bracken and briar in some woody glen, breathin', as they passed alang, music sae sweet and words sae affectin', that the verra brooks and trees hae caught the speerit o' their utterances, and burst forth in sympathetic song. And no seldom hae they thrown their mantles ower the humble and the lowly, as in the instance o' Bobby Burns and——

North. The Ettrick Shepherd.

Tickler. Plato somewhere attributes the effect of music to its imitation of the intonations of the voice.

North. So does Rousseau.

* *vices* = voices.

Shepherd. Do no say sae, Tickler, for I hae muckle respect for Plawto, and dinna like to differ wi' ocht that he may hae said. But surely nae one, and much less the Grecian feelosopher, could think for a moment that music sae resembles th' intonations o' the voice as to be indebted to sic imitation for its poo'r ower the feelings.

North. To association, more than to imitation, is to be attributed the effect of music. For example, the air which Tickler has played with so much taste and feeling, moves us more, in consequence of its associations, than it would if no such associations were connected with it. The words with which it has become indissolubly wedded operate to create those tender emotions which swell the heart, as much, perhaps, as the music itself. And so with our national anthem.

Shepherd. Nae dout, sir. But ye do not agree wi' De Quinshy?

North. No, for his argument is certainly defective. To draw an inference, in favour of his opinion, from the fact that the cathedrals of York and Cologne are indisputably superior to a hunting-box or a park-lodge, though graced by "the beauty of appropriateness," is to commit the error of Plato, who confounded the harmony of music with visible symmetry. There is no such analogy; their uses are different, and no just comparison can be drawn between them. This is evident from the fact that no person, however uncultivated—and even though he may have spent his life within the circle of his native hills—would prefer the park-lodge or the hunting-box to the cathedral, whereas it is a fact that thousands upon thousands,

nay, even the great majority of people, prefer the simplest melody to the most elaborate works of Mendelssohn or Beethoven.

Shepherd. Dinna stap, sir, for I lo'e to hear ye break a lance wi' ane so worthy o' your genie.

North. And if, as Scott has said,*—and no one will question the truth of his statement,—the highest and most legitimate end of the fine arts is to affect the human passions, and if, as I have stated, the majority of people are more moved by simple airs than by more elaborate compositions, it must be granted that the popular taste for that description of music which best accomplishes the highest end of the art cannot proceed from the want of education of the musical taste, else to supply such want is to lead us away from the true object of the art.

Tickler. Very plausible, North, but scarcely fair. Ought you not to inquire which of the two, simple or elaborate music, produces most effect upon a musician—that is, a person whose musical taste has been educated, which Scott's was not, for the simple reason that he had none to educate.

Shepherd. Hem! what say ye to that, sir?

North. I believe, Tickler, that the emotions of musicians are more easily moved by the melody of simple airs than by the brilliance or elaborateness of more presumptuous works. They admire the skill displayed by the latter, just as the educated man admires the sublimity of *Paradise Lost*; but the simplest airs will bring tears into the eyes, or joy to the heart, sooner than the most elaborate compositions,—even as the simple words of a lyric poem will

* Lockhart's *Life of Scott*, ch. 68.

move with tenderness or stir with enthusiasm, whilst the glories of Milton's epic, though incomparably superior as a work of genius, produce intellectual gratification, but operate in an inferior degree upon the emotional feelings. And the reason of this becomes sufficiently apparent when we consider that the pleasure afforded by music to those of uncultivated musical tastes is almost entirely of an emotional kind, whereas in the case of the musician the emotional pleasure becomes lessened as his intellectual or critical states become developed, there being, notwithstanding that they are, as Mr. Spencer has remarked,* inextricably entangled, an antagonism between cognition and emotion. The intellectual becomes paramount, the emotional subordinate. Hence, the simplest melody may give a greater degree of emotional pleasure to those unskilled in music, than the highest efforts of a Mendelssohn can impart to the most accomplished musician.

Shepherd. Noo, Tickler!

North. The music of early times must have been of the simplest kind, and yet we have the testimony of Plato and Aristotle as to the excellence and pathos of the early music of Lesser Asia, whence the Greeks derived theirs.

Shepherd. Dinna add anither word, sir, for your argument's just perfect. Gin the true aim o' the fine airts be to move the passions, and gin the simplest songs can affect us mair than the grandest epic, hoo much mair affectin' maun the simplest airts be than the maist elaborate compositions o' the greatest composers! And whan ane o' these simple airts is played

* *Principles of Psychology*, vol. i. p. 476.

upon the fiddle by sae great a master o' the instrument as Tickler, who always exhibits in his performances that elegant legawto bowin'* as weel's that crisp and closely articulated staccawto † which denotes the true artist, the effect is amaist overpoo'rin'. Oh, luk!—luk, Tickler!

Tickler. Why, surely——

Shepherd. Ring the bell, Tickler! ring the bell, and ca' for a bowl of Glenlivet, for North has fainted.

[TICKLER rings vehemently.]

(Enter AMBROSE with Glenlivet.)

Shepherd. Oh, Awmrose! ye maun surely hae the gift o' prevision, for ye hae brocht the balmy restorer. Rax it ower.

Ambrose (kneeling by "the old man eloquent"). My dear, dear master!

Shepherd (pouring the Glenlivet down NORTH'S throat, while TICKLER upholds his head). Hoo he sips! Did ye ever see siccan unquenchable thirst? Hold firm, Tickler, till I empty the last drap intil his throat. There!

Ambrose. He moves, gentlemen.

Shepherd. And na wunner.

North (opening his eyes). He—he—ha—exac—tly so.

Shepherd. Is't na a fearsome sicht! Na dout o' his being drunk, for na mortal man could hae ta'en a pint o' Glenlivet at ane draucht and no be the waur for't.

* *Legawto bowin'* = legato bowing.

† *Staccawto* = staccato.

North (starts up and staggers across the room à la Macbeth).—

“Avaunt ! and quit my sight ! Let the earth hide thee !
Thy bones are marrowless, thy blood is cold ;
Thou hast no speculation in those eyes
Which thou dost glare with !”

Shepherd. Is't na fearfu', Tickler, to watch the agony depeckit in his face ?

Ambrose. Oh, my dear, good Mr. North !

North.—

“What man dare, I dare :
Approach thou like the rugged Russian bear,
The arm'd rhinoceros, or the Hyrcan tiger ;
Take any shape but that, and my firm nerves
Shall never tremble : or be alive again,
And dare me to the desert with thy sword ;
If trembling I inhabit then, protest me
The baby of a girl. Hence, horrible shadow !
Unreal mockery, hence !”

[*The Ghost disappears.*

North (recovering).—

“Why, so ; being gone,
I am a man again.”

Shepherd. Oh, ye auld hypocrite ! But I'll forgie ye gin ye ever get a caulker o' Glenlivet oot o' me in that fashion again.

Tickler. It was a pity, North, you did not take a peep at James whilst he held the whisky to your lips, for he seemed the very personification of Minerva pouring the ambrosian nectar into the breast of Achilles.

North. I scarcely understand.

Shepherd. Ou, ay, but ye canna hae drunk a hail pitcher o' strang whusky and no ken the fack. But that was grand actin', Mr. North, and reminded me o' Macready, and the elder Kean, wha seemed to be the verra impersonificawtion o' the characters which the genie of Shakspeer has conjured up.

Tickler. And which none of our present actors seem capable of embodying with the same force and power as that which charmed us in former years.

North. You forget Phelps and Fechter.

Shepherd. They are both gude eneuch i' their way, but no to be compared wi' Macready. Phelps, thae graceful, and at times powerfu', hasna that continued eedentity wi' his characters which sae distinguished the ither, wha seemed sae much to hae forgotten his ain personawility as to hae that, in verra truth, what ithers but affeck. Weel do I remember seein' him act Hawmlet, i' E'inbro', and never can the impression which he made upon me be forgotten. Frae the first moment when he stepped upo' the stage, and in ane or twa words showed Hawmlet's jealousy and dislike of his guilty uncle—on thrae that noble soliloquy upo' the uselessness o' life, in which the pent-up agony o' years seemed to burst forth i' the exclamation—

“O God! O God!

How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable
Seem to me all the uses of this world!”—

on thrae the indescribable terror o' the ghaist scene, and the last ane o' a'—he chained me to my seat and made me amaist forget, whilst he ca'd forth so mony

emotions, that he was but the actor and me the spectawtor o' a play.

North. Fechter, James, is a marvel in his way; for it is little less than incredible that a Frenchman can so far have mastered the niceties of Shakespeare, and have become so thoroughly imbued with his genius, as to be able to represent Hamlet with success.

Shepherd. Would it no be as difficult for a German?

Tickler. No.

Shepherd. But why?

Tickler. Because it is not only more difficult for a Frenchman to master the difficulties of our pronunciation, but even to appreciate Shakespeare; for the genius of the French drama is altogether opposed to that of our own. The same cannot, however, be said of the German drama, with which, indeed, we have much in common. The genius of the first consists in its taste, its vivacity, and elegant declamation; but is fettered by the unities, and knows nothing of the wildness or the grandeur of Shakespeare—of his acute perception of character, of his wild bursts of poetry and passion, his fitful exclamations, impatient questions, his irregular but natural dialogue. This distinction—which is national—explains why Voltaire preferred Addison's Cato to Hamlet, and why Shakespeare has never met with the same appreciation in France as in Germany. The criticisms of Lessing, Goethe, the Schlegels, and Gervinus evince, indeed, so just an appreciation of our dramatist, that it is difficult to believe them the productions of foreigners.

Shepherd. I think I catch a glimmer o' your

meanin', a'thaigh it appears to me to place French leeterature at the bottom, rather than at the tap, o' the tree; for surely the jewel's o' mair value than the settin'. Noo, it canna be douted that the French hae mair o' what is ca'd taste than either we or the Germans, a'thaigh I'm unco' glad till hear ye say that they canna compar wi' us in the esthetic qualities o' our respective dramatic leeterature. Gin this be sae, it's easy to understaun' why Fechter should be thocht a wunner o' a Frenchman.

North. I think Tickler scarcely does justice to our neighbours when he states that Shakespeare has not met with that appreciation in France that has been accorded to him in Germany. Certainly German writers preceded those of France in the study and criticism of our great dramatist, but we should err egregiously were we to assume that the opinion of him held by Voltaire has been accepted by French writers of this century.* We have, indeed, only to refer to the criticisms of Guizot, De Barante, Villemain, Mézières, Taine, and others, in proof of the estimation in which Shakespeare has been held in France for a long time past. Nor is it surprising that the palm for acute and sound criticism of Shakespeare must be accorded to German writers, the German drama being

* "Ce n'est point un médiocre honneur pour l'esprit français que d'avoir trouvé sitôt des traits justes et délicats pour caractériser le génie d'un poète dont nous comprenons les beautés moins facilement que les peuples de race teutonique. Nous avons d'autant plus de motifs de nous en réjouir que les critiques d'outre-Rhin ne citent jamais ceux de nos écrivains qui se sont occupés du théâtre Anglais, et qu'ils feignent de croire que nous en sommes restés sur ce sujet aux opinions de Voltaire."—Mézières' *Shakspeare, ses Œuvres et ses Critiques*, preface, p. 12.

more nearly assimilated to our own than that of France, which has always been of a more formal and passionless character.

Tickler. Has not this arisen from their too servile imitation of Greek authors?

North. No doubt both Racine and Corneille copied to excess the placidity of the Greek dramatists, forgetting that both the origin, purpose, and surroundings of the Greek drama debarred it from the exhibition of character, and dealt solely with incident. The French, however, like ourselves, regard the true end of the drama to be the development of character, and opposed, therefore, to the idea under which the masterpieces of antiquity were written. It is not, therefore, to be wondered at that the resemblance between the French and Greek plays is more apparent than real.* Had Corneille and Racine thought less of Æschylus and Euripides, and had they disregarded the dogmas of Aristotle as to the unities, their dramas would have been truer to nature. It cannot be denied, however, that the French have dealt with considerable success with the outward manifestations of character, although their writings are deficient in that mental analysis, that exhibition of the inner workings of the passions, which are so noticeable a characteristic of Shakespeare. The dialogue, too, is stiff and argumentative, rather than natural and passionate.

Tickler. As in the Greek drama.

North. And yet the French do not hesitate to

* "Les classiques italiens et français ressemblent autant aux Grecs qu'il est possible aux modernes de leur ressembler sans tomber dans le pastiche. Mais il faut bien avouer que cette ressemblance est plus apparente que réelle."—*Ibid.* p. 504.

assert that Phèdre is the most poetical and natural of all dramatic characters.*

Shepherd. Surely they dinna say that, sir ; for though I'm no familiar wi' the French drawma, I canna think that they hae been able to reeval, much less to surpass, the poo'r wi' which Shakspeer has drawn the characters o' the gentle and confidin' Desdemona, the ambitious and resolute Lady Macbeth, the wanderin' and lovin' Ophelia, the passionate tenderness o' Juliet, or ony ither o' the many female characters which breathe in the pages o' the great Incomparable.

North. Although Phèdre is portrayed with remarkable power, and is, perhaps, next to those of Shakespeare, the most striking in modern dramatic literature, it yet lacks the slight touches, the minute shading, the freedom and elasticity of expression natural to her sex, without which a character cannot be said to be perfect. By how many little traits, as well as those more prominent, would Shakespeare have depicted the passion which consumed Phèdre ! With what power he would have exhibited the terror, the tenderness, the remorse which that passion occasioned ! How the character of Hippolytus would have acquired the dignity which distinguishes him in Euripides, whilst he would have lost none of that passion with which Racine has endowed him ; and Aricia become more loving by the display of more of that feminine tenderness which attaches us to Juliet ! There would

* "Phèdre avec son amour, avec sa jalousie, avec ses remords, est à la fois le plus poétique, et le plus vrai de tous les personnages qui soient au théâtre."—*Notice sur Racine*, prefixed to Lahure's edition of Racine.

have been no such declaration respecting Hippolytus as that which Phèdre made to C enone—a declaration as useless as it was untruthful:—

“ Je le vois comme un monstre effroyable à mes yeux.”

Tickler. Pooh, pooh, North! this is mere hypercriticism. Phèdre abounds with so many excellences, and contains so many passages of beauty and power, that it must ever rank as a *chef-d'œuvre*. I know nothing, indeed, to surpass Racine's description of the death of Hippolytus.

(*Enter AMBROSE with a note for NORTH, who reads it.*)

Shepherd. What's the maitter, sir?

North. Good night, James.

Shepherd. Surely ye nae gaen?

North. I must, for Maga is short of proof.

Shepherd. Confoond Mawga! Weel, then, gude night. Tickler and me'll stap and finish the Glenlivet.

[*Exit NORTH and GURNEY.*]

IX.

SCENE—*The Snuggery. Time—Nine o'clock.*

Present—NORTH, TICKLER, and SHEPHERD.

Shepherd. Willna ane o' ye ring the bell, or is it that there's to be no more cakes and ale ?

North. Surely. [*Rings the bell.*] But give us a song, James, in the mean time.

Shepherd. I'm ower dry i' the thrapple.

North. No song, no supper, James ; so make haste.

Shepherd. Here gaes, then.

SHEPHERD *sings.*

Oh, winna ye meet me, my sweet lassie, the nicht !

Oh, winna ye tell me ye lo'e me, the noo !

Oh, winna ye share wi' me life's purest delight !

Oh, winna ye let me kiss that bonnie broo !

Believe me, I lo'e thee, and ever am dreaming

Of those lips which are ruddy, those een just sae blue ;

Of that dainty form, and that smile, sae beaming ;—

Nay, pout not those lips at thine ain lover true !

Life's joys are sweeter, and its cares no sae pressing,

When love shares the ane, and the ither divides ;

Then say thou'lt be mine, and wi' me share the blessing

That aye kindles the hearth where true lo'e abides.

Oh, come to this bosom that wi' passion is beatin',
 And gie it the joy thou alone canst impart !
 Then for life will I bless this hour of our meetin',
 And press thee wi' rapture to this panting heart.

Maybe I'm ungainly in speech and in bearing,
 Whilst thou, like a flower, hath beauty's ain charm ;
 Then be thou the rose, and I, thee upbearing,
 The stem that shall shield thee from every harm.

Then our lives like rivers, in confluence blending,
 Shall beauty and strength from our union gain ;
 And nought e'er divide them whilst rapidly wending,
 To join in the strains of Love's grandest refrain.

And noo that I've gien you a song, I'se ca' upon
 Tickler to do the same.

North. Tickler, for a song !

Tickler. Why, really, gentleman, I'm not given
 to improvisation.

Shepherd. Tush, tush, Tickler ! sing awa' !

Tickler. Here goes, then.

TICKLER *sings.*

THE MAN IN THE MOON.

Did you ever hear tell of the Man in the Moon,
 Who's hoping to pay us a visit very soon ?
 His balloon is preparing
 To give him an airing,
 And folks at his advent will shortly be staring.

But the journey being long, he'll just make a call—
 Unless his intentions are upset by a squall—
 To the gods on Olympus,
 Of whom he will tell us,
 And among whom, no doubt, he'll make quite a fuss.

First of all there'll be Jupiter—otherwise Jove—
 Who, to judge from report, is a very queer cove ;
 Who, though managing thunder,
 Must needs knuckle under
 To her, in marrying whom he made a big blunder.

Then there's no doubt that Venus will make him endure
 The agonies that rag'd in the breast of the Moor,—
 When he seiz'd a short pillow,
 And without punctilio
 Put an end to his bride, and then cried out "O ! O !"*

With Diana he'll hunt, and sing with Apollo,
 And drink at the banquets that are sure to follow,
 Till he's a pain in the head,
 That will scarcely have fled
 When he's rous'd by Aurora and gets out of bed.

After a while he'll leave them, and come down to earth,
 And be astonish'd at what the English call mirth ;
 In bonnie Scotland he'll find
 We're to his faults very blind,
 Gin the brogue does not drive him right out of his mind !

But he'll be much surpris'd, when he mounts Calton Hill,
 To find our modern Parthenon unfinish'd still ;
 And to better th' occasion,
 He'll make an oration,
 Which won't be too flattering to the Scotch nation.†

When he returns to the moon, his native retreat,
 He'll resume his position on his downy seat ;
 And looking down at this sphere,
 Which he found very queer,
 He'll long for a draught of Bass's best beer !

* "O, insupportable ! O heavy hour !"

† See St. Luke xiv. 28-30.

Shepherd. Pu' the bell again, Mr. North, and we'll toast Mr. Tickler in a bumper o' yill. But what about the eisters?

North. Ambrose will not forget them.

(*Enter AMBROSE with the board of Five Hundred, and TAPPYTOORIE with ale.*)

Shepherd. Noo, that's just astonishin'! Pray, Awmrose, hoo cam ye to bring yill and no Glenlivet?

Ambrose. Pardon me, gentlemen, if I have been mistaken, but I interpreted the bell to have asked for ale.

Shepherd. Haw, haw! An' ye mean to say, Awmrose, that when Mr. North pu's the bell ye can tell what liquor is wanted?

Ambrose. Almost invariably, sir.

North. You see, James, how exquisite is my touch! But let us drink to Tickler, and then fall to the board.

Shepherd. Weel, I'm uncommon thrusty, so here's to you, Mr. Tickler.

[*The toast is drunk, and the Three surround the board.*]

Shepherd. The rapidity wi' which the eisters vanish is surpreezin'. The retreat o' the Ten Thousand was slow i' comparison to it.

Tickler. Ha! but the oysters have not the temptation of whisky to stay their flight.

Shepherd. Nae mair had the Greeks. [*To NORTH.*] Gin ye devoor sae voraciously ye'll be ta'en ill, and we'se hae to fetch the stomach-pump.

North. Never fear, James; the old man lets

digestion wait on appetite. But Tickler was saying something about the Ten Thousand.

Tickler. I was telling James that they drank whisky during their retreat.

Shepherd. Sae he was ; but muckle as I respeck him as a man, I'm bound, in the interest of truth, to gie him the lee direck.

Tickler. Then we'll fine you in a caulker, James.

Shepherd. Sae ye shall, gin ye arena leein'.

North. Agreed.

Tickler. Have you ever read Xenophon, James ?

Shepherd. Hae you ever heard o' *Tetrachordon*, Tickler ?

Tickler. Because, if you have, you will remember that the Greeks sucked "barley-wine" through reeds, in Armenia.

Shepherd. It willna do, Mr. Tickler—it willna do.

Tickler. And this "barley-wine" was, according to Sir Alexander Grant,* nothing more or less than whisky.

Shepherd. Whew ! but you're no in earnest ?

North. I'll ring the bell, gentlemen, for the caulker.

Shepherd. Dinna ring, Mr. North, dinna ring ; for I'll no pay for a drap unless you assure me Tickler isna leein'.

North. You surely don't wish me to dispute Sir Alexander's authority ? Besides, I remember that Æschylus, in *The Suppliants*, speaks of the Egyptians as drinkers of barley-wine.

Shepherd. Weel, then, I'll substitute a song for the liquor.

* *Xenophon.* "Ancient Classics for English Readers," p. 46.

North. Pardon me, James, but I have already rung.

Shepherd. Then I'll say, in the language o' Milton—

“ — misdeem not then,
If such affront I labour to avert.”

North. Bravo! But here comes the whisky.

(*Enter* AMBROSE *with a jug of the Nectar.*)

Shepherd. Then has there been a plot against me, for it's impossible Awmrose could have itherwise known to bring in whusky.

Ambrose. Pardon me, Mr. Hogg, but I should not have ventured—

Shepherd. It's verra strange. Weel, weel, put it doun to me, Awmrose, and dinna forget no to remind me to pay for't.

[*Exit* AMBROSE.]

North. If Ambrose takes the hint, James, it's but little you'll lose by the transaction.

Tickler. James, here's long life to you!

North. And a happy one!

Shepherd. Here gaes!

Gurney (*from the cupboard*).—

“ Each to his lips applies the nectared urn.”

Shepherd. Oh, man Gurney! but I puty you frae the bottom o' ma hairt, for haen to tak notts shut up i' the cupboard, whiles we three

“ — the genial day prolong
In feasts ambrosial, and celestial song.”

Aweel, aweel, if ye twa deevils haena cleared the brodd, whiles I, like a fuil, hae been sympatheezin' wi' Gurney!

North. I hesitated about taking the last one, James; but the thought of leaving her there, separated from her companions, a prey to solitude, and maybe a broken heart, was too much, and so, with an effort in which regret was mingled with pity, I consigned her to the companionship of those whom in life she had loved so well.

Shepherd. It's an instance which proves wi' what facility men can eedentify their pleasure wi' their duty. Sae was it wi' Clytemnestra, wha tried to justify her horrid deed as being but righteous vengeance for the sacrifice o' Iphigenia, while in truth and in fack it was her lust for Ægisthus that led her to the crime. And didna Giovanni* try to justify to himsel' and the friar his incestuous love, by arguments which his wishes and no his conscience dictated? Nay, even th' insidious Iago tried to cawm his conscience—gin he had ane—by persuadin' it that his damnable duplicity was, after a,' seemin' honest. And didna Ottima and Sibald † make conscience wield the weapon which passion had fashioned? And Lovelace, nae dout, tried to persuade himsel' that his conduct towards Clarissa was honourable, in that it wad rescue her frae the suit o' auld Mr. Solmes.

Tickler. Ah! how difficult it is for man

“ — to measure passion's force,
Or misery's temptation!”

North. Very true; but it is easy to cite examples

* Ford's *'Tis Pity*, etc.

† Bowring's *Pippa Passes*.

of a contrary character to those given by James. The sacrifice of Iphigenia,—was it not a terrible blow to the feelings of Agamemnon, and only suffered by him from a sense of terrible duty? And do you suppose that Orestes committed matricide because he was led to it by evil passions? And did not the Doge of Venice, in *The Two Foscari*, sacrifice his parental feelings to his duty to the State when he signed the sentence against his son? So, too, with Brutus, when he sentenced his two sons to death for conspiring against the Republic; and the consul Manlius, who condemned his son to death for a breach of discipline.

Shepherd. Human natur' is, undoubtedly, a blending o' opposites, an inexplicable intermingling of virtues and vices, just as on a spring day brichtness and gloom strive for the mastery; and yet in almost a' characters there is a moral rainbow which gies hawps o' a cawm, if no a radiant, eve. I have aften been struck with the antagonisms that seem to exist in maist characters,—the noble and the good presenting a strange contrast to the baser traits which are also revealed. Is it no a fact that the greatest scapegraces are aften gifted wi' attributes which attract us to them, far more than do the icy proprieties of many wha appear to be equally devoid of virtues as of vices?

Tickler. So it is; the errors and weaknesses of some men, like atoms of dust, serve to reveal the light which would be otherwise unseen.

North. Ah! it is the unobtrusive acts of kindness, the scarce seen, but deeply felt, traits of goodness that win the heart; just as, to carry out Tickler's simile, the non-luminous, and not the light-waves, of the sunbeam are the bearers of heat to our world.

Tickler. And is it not the fact that

“The world knows nothing of its greatest men?”

Shepherd. I dinna believe it is true; nor does Mr. North, even thaigh his favourite, Mr. Wudsworth, said so.

Tickler. My quotation was from Sir Henry Taylor, and not from Wordsworth, James.

Shepherd. Then he maun hae borrowed it frae the Lakist. What say you, sir?

North. You refer to the lines in *The Excursion*, which, if I remember right, run thus:—

“Strongest minds
Are often those of whom the noisy world
Hears least.”

Shepherd (to TICKLER). Didna I tell you it was a plagiarism frae Wudsworth? But, as I said, I dinna believe in th’ apothegm. How, indeed, can it be shown to be true? The men and women wha are gifted wi’ the greatest minds and the noblest hairts canna help being great, and greatness maun o’ necessity manifest itself; it cannot pass through life without leaving its impress, which may be read by no a few ainly.

Tickler. Such men and women may lack ambition,

“That last infirmity of noble minds,”

and thus lose the incentive to renown.

Shepherd. Then are they no among the greatest, for true greatness is eenimical to repose. Its very condition is activity, without which there can be no pre-eminence.*

* “I cannot praise a fugitive and cloistered, unexercised and unbreathed virtue, that never sallies out and sees her adversary, but slinks out of the race where that immortal garland is to be run for, not without dust and heat.”—Milton’s *Of Reformation in England*.

Tickler. But this activity may lead them into by-paths rather than into the highways of life, and so the knowledge of their capacities is confined to a few. Your opinion is unsound, James.

Shepherd. That's easier said than prued. Noo, admitting that some men wi' poo'rfu' intellects are, frae the nature o' their constitution—whether mental or physical, or baith—averse to publicity, and may therefore narrow the sphere o' their activities, still it doesna follow that they are the greatest. On the contrary, if they leave naething behind them but a belief in their po'or to hae achieved something which wad hae made the world wiser or happier than they found it, surely it is no richt to set this assumed but unproved capawcity in comparison wi' the *bonny-feede* achievements of a Plawto, an Aristotle, a Bacon, a Shakspeer, a Milton, a Newton, or a Wellington? It is far mair likely that mony hae been credited wi' capabilities they never possessed, than that men gifted wi' true greatness hae passed frae the world unkent. Is it not, indeed, much easier to seem to be, than to be, great? But what are ye after, Mr. North, to let Tickler and me hae a' the talk to oursel's?

North. I was listening attentively, James.

Shepherd. Then what say ye about it?

North. It is impossible to verify the saying, although it is credible enough that some of the greatest minds have passed away unknown except to a few who have had opportunities of gauging their prowess. Gray, in his *Elegy*, finely says—

“*Perhaps* in this neglected spot is laid
Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire,
Hands that the rod of empire might have sway'd,
Or waked to ecstasy the living lyre.”

The question involves one upon which much has been written—the power of circumstance. Are we, like Sardanapalus, its slaves? Whilst recognizing its moulding power, I am inclined to agree with Carlyle* that there are no truly great men that could not be *all* sorts of men, diversity of aptitudes notwithstanding.

Tickler. Your mention of Carlyle † reminds me of a passage in one of his writings, in which he says, “Perhaps our greatest poets are the mute Miltons; the vocals are those whom by happy accident we lay hold of, one here, one there, as it chances, and *make* vocal.” Speaking, however, of the influence of circumstance, Lewis ‡ denies that character is formed by it. He admits its modifying influence. But what is meant by circumstance? If, as I suppose, it embraces all that constitute the surroundings of life——

North. Its environment, as Mr. Spencer would say.

Tickler. ——then surely it has a moulding, and not merely a modifying power. Can we, for instance, expect goodness to be the fruition of squalor, ignorance, and vice?

Shepherd. We canna indeed. But, after a’, we can rejoice at the noble efforts that are being made to rescue the vicious frae the terrible depths intil which ignorance and misery hae plunged too many o’ our puirer brethren. What may we not, indeed, expeck frae the institution o’ a system o’ national edication, to say naethin’ o’ the humanizing influences o’ religion?

* *The Hero as Poet.*

† *Miscellanies*, vol. iv. p. 149, Cabinet Edition.

‡ *Life of Goethe*, vol. i. ch. 3.

Tickler. No man has a greater reverence for true religion than I have, but I am convinced that there must be something besides preaching, else the load which presses so heavily upon the community will never be removed. The obstacles which thwart all efforts to goodness must be overcome before we can expect virtue to thrive. Substitute cleanliness for squalor, make the attractions of home more potent than those of the gin-palace, wipe out the stain of national ignorance, open to our overworked population the treasures of our museums and art galleries on the sabbath, stretch out the hand of fellowship to the poor and the tempted, and then men may preach religion with some hope of being heard, instil lessons of morality without despairing of success, and have faith in the advent of a day when intemperance shall have been exorcised by means more potent than those at the command of temperance societies ; when crime shall have ceased because the atmosphere which fostered it shall have been purified, and the temptations which induced it shall have been supplanted by incentives to virtue. Surely we may well say, in the words of Tennyson—

“ Ring out old shapes of foul disease ;
 Ring out the narrowing lust of gold ;
 Ring out the thousand wars of old,
 Ring in the thousand years of peace.

“ Ring in the valiant man and free,
 The larger heart, the kindlier hand ;
 Ring out the darkness of the land,
 Ring in the Christ that is to be.”

Shepherd. But hoo is a' this to be done ?

Tickler. The task is well-nigh hopeless, James ;

but time and effort will effect much. Of one thing I am certain, and that is, that cleanliness is next to godliness, and that until the squalid habitations which fester in the heart of our large towns are swept away, to give place to dwellings in which it is possible to observe the ordinary decencies of life, immorality and vice must and will thrive. Once let the poorest of the poor taste of the pleasures incident to a cleanly home, and you implant in him the truest safeguard against intemperance and crime.*

Shepherd. Weel, perhaps the time isna far distant when the grosser evils that afflict the puir and ignorant shall be dispersed, like the morning mist, by influences which shall harbinger a brichter day.

North.—

“ Perhaps ! It is a blessed sound,
 And hope is fond of it. The sable slave
 Stands on the beach of Western India’s isles,
 In evening’s breathing hour, and says “ perhaps.”
 The captive in his darksome prison-house
 Doth watch a ray of light upon the wall,
 And gives an utterance to the holy word.
 ’Tis heard within Potosi’s silver tombs,
 Gasps in the fetid air of hospitals,
 And in the naked huts of poverty.”

Poor Sheil !

* You cannot improve dwellings without, *pro tanto*, lessening intemperance and vice ; you cannot diminish drunkenness without diminishing pauperism and brutality, disease and death ; you cannot give people comfortable houses, without sobriety, health, education, virtually if not actually increased wages, and raised moral feeling, inevitably and by a thousand indirect channels, advancing also, and aiding the good work in modes as yet undreamed of.”—*Enigmas of Life*, p. 14.

“ It seems to me that pauperism is not an affair so much of wages as of dwellings.”—*Lothair*, p. 16.

Shepherd. And why pour Sheil?

North. The quotation is from his *Adelaide*, a play to which the acting of Miss O'Neil gave a temporary success, I care not to think how many years ago.

Tickler. What a host of brilliant men were his contemporaries—Curran, and O'Connell, and Grattan, and Bushe, and Plunkett! It is a curious fact that certain eras seem to be flowering times of genius—times when it bursts into full bloom; and then, as in the case of the aloe, there is a long period during which it flowers not. So was it in the Elizabethan age, which gave birth to a race of dramatists whose brilliance threw into deeper shade the puling mediocrity of their successors.

North. According to Comte, the law of progress is as applicable to poetry and art, as to science and politics. The perfection of æsthetic creation requiring as its condition, according to his view, a consentaneousness in the feelings of mankind which depends for its existence on a fixed and settled state of opinion, as in the days of Homer, of Æschylus, of Phidias, and of Dante.*

Tickler. But can it be said that opinion was settled in the days of Æschylus, or of Dante? Did not Æschylus live at a time when the policy of Cimon and Aristides had to give place to that of Pericles, and when the most determined attacks were made against the authority of the Areopagus? And were not the factions of Guelf and Ghibelline, of Bianchi and Neri, at perpetual feud in the age of Dante; and was he not banished, nay, even doomed to death, and his property confiscated? Surely those were

* Mill's *Comte and Positivism*, p. 117.

not times of settled opinions, or of consentaneous feeling?

North. Genius is certainly fortuitous, and not the outgrowth of any era, whether harmonious or discordant in feeling or opinion. It is moulded, no doubt, by surrounding circumstances, both national and individual. The sentiments which agitate like a shock of electricity, the nation at large, find expression in their writings, just as electricity culminates in lightning. The grandeur and gloom characteristic of the writings of Æschylus are referable to the character of his genius, and to the influences which nurtured it. The Eleusinian mysteries had deeply impressed his youthful mind with the solemnity of religious rites, and with reverence and awe for those who had been initiated in the secret doctrines; whilst the battles of Marathon and Salamis, in both of which he was engaged, had fired his imagination. It would, therefore, be strange if his tragedies were other than what they are. And so with Phidias. The Pantheism of the Greeks had imbued them with an affectionate reverence for Nature which it is difficult for us to realize. The love of the beautiful became a part of their nature, whilst their imagination was warmed into fervour by the poems of Homer and the traditions of their gods and heroes. Without these concomitant circumstances, Phidias could never have executed such masterpieces as his Minervas or Jupiter Olympus.* Shelley hit the mark when he

* "Les plus grands hommes évidemment sont seuls appelés ainsi à formuler une pensée collective, à concentrer, à absorber, à ranger sous la discipline de leur génie tout ce qui s'est produit d'idées autour d'eux, avant eux."—Labitte, *La Divine Comédie avant Dante*, quoted in Longfellow's *Dante*.

said that men of genius are the combined product of such internal powers as modify the nature of others, and of such external influences as excite and sustain these powers,—they are not one but both.*

Shepherd. Grantin' a' this, I dinna see that you hae proved Comte to be wrang, for, according to Mr. North, he ainly says that the mair harmonious is the national sentiment and opinion, the grander will be the warks which genius will produce. And isna he richt? Granted that Æschylus and Dante hae written poems o' the first order even in times o' political and religious unrest, it doesna follow that they wadna hae written still nobler warks had they been born in mair auspicious times; for, after a', isna an unsettled state of opinion or feeling a hindrance to the perfect development and harmonious exercise o' man's powers?

North. What you say, James, is just; but Comte goes further than you suppose, for he instances the days of Homer, of Æschylus, and of Phidias, as those in which there was the consentaneousness and the fixity of which he speaks. Comte's views seem to be shared by many eminent writers, and especially by M. Taine, who goes so far as to believe that man is altogether the creature of circumstance, and that by duly determining certain historical forces, of which man is the unconscious agent and manifestation, and which are defined by M. Taine as the sum of the

“Dante is the spokesman of the Middle Ages; the thought they lived by stands here, in everlasting music. These sublime ideas of his, terrible and beautiful, are the fruit of the Christian meditation of all the good men who had gone before him.”—Carlyle's *Heroes and Hero-Worship*.

* Preface to *Prometheus Unbound*.

tenderness and aptitudes of individuals, it is possible "to explain why an author, artist, or architect produced a particular book, painting, or edifice; why an age was distinguished for a particular form of literature, art, or architecture; what was the mental history of past generations, as exhibited in the writings or doings of individuals?" *

Tickler. That seems an extraordinary opinion to hold. To say that historical forces become concentrated into a focus in any individual in such a manner as to regulate his whole life, is not only to assume that man is destitute of free-will, but also that the pressure of these forces acts upon all alike. But if this be so, how account for such men as Socrates, Galileo, Luther? Surely there was nothing in the ages which preceded them that, by the mere force of events irrespective of the bent of their own character and genius, could have caused them to combat the ideas then prevalent? I should hold the converse of M. Taine's theory to be true: that man, so far from being the blind instrumentality of forces operating in him and over which he has no control, is able, by virtue of his own individuality—constituted, as that individuality is, of the powers of mind, of affection, and of will—to divert into altogether new and unexpected channels the tendencies which may be operative in those around him.

Shepherd. Aye, there hae been times when the tendencies o' which ye are speakin' have been so antagonistic—when the minds o' men hae been so unsettled that there seemed to be no secure resting-

* Introductory chapter to Taine's *Notes on England*, by W. F. Rae, p. 21.

place for opinion ; when a' that had been held to be grand, and beautifu', and true in life had amaist lost their haud upon the mind and conscience ; when it might be truly said, in the language o' Hawmlet—

“ The time is out of joint ; ”

that some one man, or set o' men, has stood oot frae the crood, and has, by the poo'r o' his genie, or the nobility of his sowl, or the energy of his wull, stilled the turbulence o' the public, and broucht order oot o' chaos. Tell no me that ony tendencies—ca' them historical, or what ye wull—have the poo'r to mould and fashion the mind and conscience o' man. If it were so, then wad there, indeed, hae been through a' ages a consentaneousness in the feelings and opinions o' mankind ; but it wad hae been the unity and placidity o' death, and no the fruitfulness of energy and life.

North. Very true, James. M. Taine, however, argues that the forces of which he speaks “ are but the sum of the tendencies and aptitudes of individuals,” and “ that individuals exist and operate as well in a people, an age, or a race.” Now, it seems to me that this admission is fatal to his theory ; for if each component part of the aggregate force of which he speaks has the power to follow its own preferences, to pursue its own thoughts, to act according to its own volition, then what becomes of the forces he predicates, but which are thus shown to be incapable of bending the individual to itself ?

Tickler. The question appears to resolve itself into the possibility of a science of history.

North. Quite so. Comte, of course, believed he

had established not only the possibility, but the foundations, of such a science in his theory of three phases of society—the theological, the metaphysical, and the positive ; and M. Taine appears to have imbibed his views.

Tickler. Well, I may be mistaken ; but it certainly does appear to me to be fatuous in the extreme to hold that the progress of society is resolvable into theorems.

North. According to Professor Goldwin Smith, “ a science of history is one thing, a philosophy of history is another.” *

Tickler. How so ? I remember reading an article in the *Fortnightly*, † in which Mr. Morley assumes that what is called the philosophy of history is really, properly speaking, the science of history. And certainly Sir William Hamilton distinguishes historical, or empirical, knowledge, from philosophical, or scientific, or rational knowledge—the former being the knowledge that a thing is, the latter the knowledge why or how it is. In his view, therefore, philosophical knowledge is synonymous with science. ‡

North. But Mr. Smith distinguishes the two. In his view, the philosophy of history rests upon connection—the connection between historic antecedents and their results ; whilst a science of history can rest on nothing short of causation, and must assume to deduce the laws by which each social event is determined, and by which it is shown to be the invariable consequent of such antecedent conditions.

* *Lectures on the Study of History*, p. 91.

† No. 93, New Series, p. 338.

‡ *Lectures on Metaphysics*, vol. i. p. 58.

Tickler. According to Mr. Morley, the science of history is only another name for social dynamics.

North. Call it what he likes; if it means anything, it means that the progression of events is subject to laws as certain as those that govern the physical world.

Tickler. No doubt; and he recognizes, in Comte's three stages, an adequate and scientific explanation of human development.

North. Were history amenable to this scientific treatment, then the sequences of historical events would be as much within the sphere of prevision as are the phenomena of nature, and the simplest way, therefore, of testing the hypothesis, is to apply to it the tests which are applied in the verification of other sciences. But of what verification is the science of history capable? Can it foretell coming events from the law of the three stages, or any that M. Taine or Mr. Morley have discovered?

Shepherd. No more than they can foretell what you or I will be doing a week hence.

North. Comte's law will not even bear the test of past experience, much less that of prophecy, for those who espouse the theory of necessary development as the key to history are driven to strange consequences. They are, as Goldwin Smith has said, "compelled to represent the torpid sensualism of the Roman Empire as an advance upon the vigorous, though narrow virtue of the Republic,"* and the profligacy and corruption of the Restoration as an advance upon the patriotism and heroic virtues of the Commonwealth.

* p. 95.

Tickler. Comte's theory certainly seems to require this ; but does the objection equally apply to a science of history ?

North. Science, indeed ! Pray, what progress has been made towards a science of history ? A bundle of even well-established facts is not a science.* Have they yet discovered the true method of observing historical facts ? Have they learned how duly to estimate the influences of climate, education, and circumstance ? Have they yet arrived at the most elementary principles of such a science ? Can they point to a single generalization which has stood the test of verification ? It is easy enough to subordinate facts to preconceived theories, as the history of philosophy but too well shows ; but if these theories are worth anything, they must apply to the future as well as to the past. But will any of the believers in the conception of an "undeviating regularity in the succession of historic events" presume to foretell a single page of history ? I trow not.

Shepherd. Then ye dinna think such a science possible ?

North. I do not, for I believe, with Crabb Robinson,† that the great events of political life are too unique to admit of a parallel ; and with Mr. Herbert Spencer,‡ that the acts of men are not calculable. Mr. Froude,§ also, is of this opinion.

* "But a heap of well-established facts is not a science ; the relations remain to be appreciated, the resemblances to be grouped, the laws to be reached by induction, the whole to be sought out."—Professor Ribot's *English Psychology*, p. 10,

† *Diary*, vol. i. p. 331.

‡ *Principles of Psychology*, vol. i. p. 502, Second Edition.

§ *Short Studies on Great Subjects*.

Tickler. De Quincey,* however, believed in the possibility of such a science.

Shepherd. Weel, weel, he was an awkward chiel to disagree wi', was Mr. De Quinshy; for he was as powerfu' in argument, as he was skilful in deaelectic.

North. This assumed possibility rests, of course, upon the *à posteriori* philosophy, and the alleged uniformity of what are called moral statistics. Buckle † was one of those who believed in the causal theory. Mr. Morley ‡ and Mr. Fiske § share his opinions, and they, in common with him and with all the Association Psychologists, discard the doctrine of free-will, and rely upon these statistics in support of their views.

Tickler. Maybe they deny the fact of consciousness?

North. They deny its infallibility.

Shepherd. Gin they do, what basis do they leave for knowledge? for there can be no knowledge without consciousness; and if consciousness isna to be relied upon, then a' knowledge is uncertain, and being, like wull-o' the-wisp, but an emanation frae a pestilential and deluding quagmire, canna be regarded as a safe beacon to follow.

North. Don't let me misrepresent Buckle, however; for whilst he denies the infallibility of consciousness as to the *truth* of its testimony, he admits it to be infallible as to the *fact*.

Tickler. But if consciousness is not to be relied

* "To me, I repeat, that oftentimes it seems as though the *science* of history were yet scarcely founded. There will be such a science, if at present there is not." (Vol. vii. p. 318.)

† *History of Civilization*, vol. i. ch. 1.

‡ *Fortnightly Review*, vol. xvi. New Series, p. 338.

§ *Ibid.* vol. iv. New Series, p. 277.

upon, surely all the inductions of science are equally unreliable, inasmuch as they rest upon the assumed truth of our consciousness of phenomena.* If, for instance, man's consciousness of the phenomenon of bodies gravitating towards each other be fallible as to its truth, pray, upon what basis does the law of gravitation rest?

Shepherd. I'm gettin' tired o' the subject.

North. Just a moment, James. You forget, Tickler, that the truth of consciousness is verifiable, and that your objection is therefore unfounded. One man, or a number of men, may mistake a tree for a human being, but their error is discoverable. Where all men agree in their consciousness of any phenomena, it may therefore be assumed—nay, we are bound to assume the truth of the fact thus presented. If, indeed, the truth of consciousness were not capable of verification by reducing its inferences to sensation, your objection would be unanswerable; for without inference there can be no generalization, and science would be impossible.

Shepherd. You first blaw het and then caud, until the deevil himsel' couldna tell what are your true opinions upon the subject. But why waste mair time upon sic havers?

North. Surely, James, we ought to look kindly and reverently upon all efforts after truth, and even when men's efforts fail, we ought still

“— to sympathize, be proud
Of their half-reasons, faint aspirings, dim

* “The possibility of philosophy supposes the veracity of consciousness as to the contents of its testimony.”—Sir William Hamilton's *Lectures on Metaphysics*, vol. i. p. 374.

Struggles for truth, their poorest fallacies,
Their prejudice and fears and cares and doubts ;
All with a touch of nobleness, despite
Their error, upward tending all, though weak,
Like plants in mines which never saw the sun."

Tickler. Our discussion reminds me of a passage in Professor Blackie's *Four Phases of Morals*,* in which he remarks "that the speculative mind, in its eagerness to embrace various phenomena under one law, is apt to run amuck against Nature, delighting, as she does sometimes, more in the compromise of various principles than in the triumph of one."

Shepherd. Is it by our Edinbro' professor?

Tickler. The same ; and his book is an excellent one. Have you see it, North ?

North. Yes, and I was somewhat amused at the fervour with which he tilts against democracy.

Shepherd. That's verra surpreezin,' seein' that ye hae dune the same aften eneuch yoursel'.

Tickler. You refer, North, to his Essay on Aristotle ? Well, what is there in it that amused you ?

North. He allows his political opinions to bias his judgment when he asserts that the right of the mere numerical majority to rule is the characteristic principle of pure democracy. The fact is, he has allowed himself to be misled by the prejudices of Aristotle, whose representation, or rather misrepresentation, of the character of democracy he accepts without question. Now, Mr. Freeman, in his admirable little work on *The Growth of the English Constitu-*

* p. 41. See also a similar remark, in Sir William Hamilton's *Lectures on Metaphysics*, vol. i. lect. 4.

tion, happens to have pointed out the fact that Aristotle's definition was not the one generally adopted by Greek historians. Herodotus and Thucydides, for instance, do not use the word in Aristotle's sense of a government carried on for the special benefit of the poor. They use the word "in the old honourable sense," and Polybius "takes as his special type of democracy the constitution of the Achaian League, which," as Mr. Freeman remarks, "had a strong element of practical aristocracy." Pericles also defines democracy "as a government of the whole people, as opposed to oligarchy, a government of only a part of the people."

Tickler. Ah! but Pericles was a democrat.

Shepherd. And you are twa oligarchs, for you keep a' the talk to yoursel'. Gie's a sang, Mr. North, for it is your turn.

North. Then, instead of a song, I'll give you a translation of Uhland's short poem *The Roe*:—

"Early at morn a hunter bold
Chas'd a roe through field and forest,
And saw within a gardenfold,
A blooming maid, and modest.

"What has happ'd to the noble steed,
That it stands quietly yonder?
What has befallen him, indeed,
Whose halloo is heard no longer?

"Still runs the roe with timorous haste
O'er mountain and through valley.
Stay, timid creature, stay and rest!
The hunter forgets to sally."

Shepherd. That's a verra short ane, so gie's anither.

North. There is a sweet poem entitled *The Nun*, but I forget it. It opens with the description of a love-sick nun wandering in a convent garden. Her lover is dead, and she exclaims—

“ Oh, happy for me he died,
 Mine own true love and sweet !
 Now I can return his love :
 To love an angel 'tis meet,
 And he's an angel above.”

Shepherd. Puir lassie! Is the translation your ain?

North. It is, though not a very good one.

Shepherd. Weel, it doesna soun' sae bad in the translation, whatever it may in the original.

North. The original runs far more smoothly than my rough rendering of it. You have probably read Longfellow's translation of Uhland's beautiful poem *The Castle by the Sea*?

Shepherd. I dinna remember.

North. You should read it, for it is admirably done—as, indeed, are all his translations. You will find it in *Hyperion*, which is one of the best romances in our language, for it combines the interest of a love-tale with the information of a book of travel, and the charms of first-rate literary conversation.

Shepherd. Then I'se no read it, for I'm just tired o' leetery conversation.

Tickler. Then, alas! for our *Noctes*.

Shepherd. Ye needna fear that I shall absent mysel' frae our meetings. I'm ower fond o' them for that.

North. Then explain yourself, James.

Shepherd. I merely meant to gie you baith a hint that it is time to be gaun, for I'm a wee bit drowsy, owing, nae dout, to the somniferous effect o' your talk the nicht.

North. What, sleepy already! [*Sings.*]

“Wir sind nicht mehr am erstan Glas,
Drum denken wir gern an dies und das,
Was rauschet und das brauset.”

Shepherd. This comes o' mixin' toddy and yill. [*To TICKLER.*] Let's ca' o' Awmrose till pit him to bed, for what an uproar there'll be in E'inbro' toun gin he's ta'en up for bein' drunk and disorderly!

North (singing).—

“So denken wir anden wilden Wald,
Darin die Stürme sausen,
Wir hören, wie das Jagdhorn schallt,
Die Ross' und Hunde brausen,
Und wie der Hirsch durchs Wasser setzt,
Die Flutten rauschen und wallen,
Und wie der Jäger rust und hetzt,
Die Schüsse schmetternd fallen.”

Pray what mean your pantomimic gestures, James?
Have the oysters disagreed with you?

Shepherd. Then ye arna fou'?

North. How dare you make such an insinuation, sir?

Shepherd. Gin ye ca' that an insinuation, I wunner what ye wad ca' an assertion. But ye needna think I'm to be frichtened by your grand airs. The deevil tak me gin I dinna believe ye were shued up, singin' sich havers.

North. Hand over the crutch, Tickler.

[TICKLER obeys, and NORTH vaults over the table, waves the crutch aloft, and performs a pirouette.

Fou', indeed! — Ask Monsieur Ducrow if the feat does not shame the base lie.

Shepherd. Wonderfu' auld man! Oh, sir! but what a treat it wad be to see you tak pairt in a ballet wi' a second Taglioni! What'n a figure you would cut, to be sure! Lythe o' limb, gracefu' in movement, ye wad be the verra impersonawtion o' the poetry o' motion. Nae, wadna ye, indeed, represent a' the grace, and majesty, and passion, which even Terpsichore hersel' could impair to dance? Therè would be a rythmic inflection i' baith your movements that wad by degrees become the verra expression o' passion; now fond and lovin' as Cupid and Pysche, then fierce and vehement as the lo'es o' the king and queen o' the forest.

Tickler. Winding up with a final bound that would bring down the house, reminding one of jocund morn standing tiptoe on the mountain-top.

North. Just one final glass, James, and then home.

Shepherd. Na, na; na mair for me.

North.—

“Oh, Jamie, I hae seen the day
Ye wad na been sae shy.”

Shepherd. Weel, then, just ae glass more. Are ye ready? Then tak time frae me.

[All three glasses are emptied simultaneously.]

And noo come alang, sir, and I see help you doun the staircase.

North. Thank you, my dear Shepherd; you were ever kind to the old man.

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

X.

SCENE—*The Snuggery. Time—Eight in the evening.*

NORTH, TICKLER, and SHEPHERD.

Shepherd (entering). For gudeness' sake gie me a caulker as hot as Vesuvius, or I shall never recover ma circulation.

Tickler. Take my advice, James, and try water.

Shepherd. Wha-t-t! wad ye hae me blawn intil a thoosand atoms by the expawnsion o' the water when it become congealed in ma stamack?

North. Drink my glass, James, and you will glow like Hesperus.

[SHEPHERD *drinks.*

Shepherd. It's amaist incredible, the instantaw-nious transition frae a state o' artic numbness to equatorial warmth and activity. I ken naethin' mair trying to a man's temper than cold; it seems to freeze a' the geniality of his natur', and to change him frae a gude-tempered, social being into an icy incarnation o' irascibility. Whusky ought, therefore, to be prized for its exhilaratin' qualities, and for its poo'r o' ca'in' forth man's humane and social instincts. What say you to that, gentlemen?

North. Whisky is, no doubt, when taken in moderation—

Shepherd. Just sae, sir ; but what is moderation ? Dinna suppose there's ony test applicable to a' men. Those wha hae gude constitutions, and who, like oursel's, are of active habits, are able to tak as much toddy, without harm to our mental or corporeal vigour, as a haill trades' union o' tailors.

Tickler. Why of tailors ?

Shepherd. Because their habits o' life tend to weaken their frames by contractin' their chests, and deprivin' them o' bodily exercise. You may know a tailor frae his high shouthers and asthmatical cough, if no frae his seedy appearance.

North. Let us hope Gurney is not yet ensconced in the cupboard ; for if your remarks reach the ear of the Ettrick tailor we may perhaps hear of your incarceration in a pair of breeks which, when once on, you may find it difficult to cast off.

Tickler. He might be left even in a worse plight, in which event he would escape the effeminacy which, according to Lord Monboddo, arises from the use of clothes.

Shepherd. Haw, haw, haw ! I dinna ken which wad be the waur alternative, thaigh I shouldna like to undergo a process o' skinnin'. But, talkin' o' tailors, did either of you ever hear o' ane bein' the faither o' a man o' genie ? Individuals in maist, if not o' a' ither trades, hae produced offspring wha hae become eminent in art, literature, or science, but I dinna remember ae single instance where the lucky, or unlucky, as the case may be, progenitor has been a disceiple o' the guse. Putting oot o' question the cases o' Chaucer, Shakspeer, and others, about whase parents we know sae little, I could name writers

who were the sons o' men o' amaist every callin' in life, excepp tailorin'.

North. The subject interests me, James.

Shepherd. Weel, then, there was Herrick, wha was the son o' a goldsmith; Drayton, Akenside, Defoe, and Kirk White, o' butchers; Cowley, o' a grocer; Cartwright and Mallet, o' innkeepers; Michael Bruce, o' a weaver; William Whitehead, o' a baker; Prior, Sam Richardson, and Whewell, o' joiners; Cowley, o' a stationer; Dr. Johnson and Hood, o' booksellers; Collins, o' a hatter; Beattie, o' a shopkeeper; Jeremy Taylor and Falconer, o' barbers; Dr. Blacklock, Isaac Barrow, Pope, and Southey, o' linen-drapers; Porson, o' a parish-clerk; Dr. Adam Clarke and Sheridan Knowles, o' schoolmasters; Archbishop Tillotson, o' a clothier; Irving, o' a tanner; Talfourd, o' a brewer; and Sydney Dobell and Ruskin, o' wine-merchants. Noo, that's a lang list, but there's nae a tailor's son among them.

Tickler. And pray, James, what class of men have produced the most eminent writers?

Shepherd. Gentlemen o' the cloth.

North. Ah! I should have guessed that. Let me see how many I can remember. Ben Jonson, Pomfret, John Philips, Marvell, Fuller, Addison, Thomson, Mickle, Young, Churchill, Robertson, Goldsmith, the Wartons, Armstrong, Blair, Cowper, Bowles, Coleridge, Isaac Taylor, Hallam, Whately, Gleig—

Shepherd. Wasna he the "subaltern" o' Mawga?

North. Yes. Besides those I have already named, there are the Brontés, Mrs. Gaskell, and Tennyson.

Shepherd. What'n a list! But is't no strange we

canna mention a single eminent writer whose father was a tailor ?

Tickler. You are unjust to the calling, James, for I can give what you appear to lack.

Shepherd. Then oot wi't.

Tickler. Samuel Pepys, esquire.

Shepherd. The son o' a tailor ?

Tickler. Assuredly.

Shepherd. Weel, after a', he scarcely redeems the guse frae the slur, for he was a vain fellow, wi' nae pretentions to leeterary ability.

Tickler. The same cannot, however, be said of Béranger, whose grandfather was a tailor.

Shepherd. Aye, but the relationship is ance too far removed.

Tickler. Well, the only other instance I can recollect is one mentioned in Mr. van Laun's able and interesting *History of French Literature*. I refer to Guillaume Figueiras, a tailor of Toulouse, who became a poet and *jongleur*.

Shepherd. But that willna do, unless his father as weel's himsel' was a tailor.

Tickler. I cannot speak as to that.

North. These facts seem to support Mr. Gregg's conclusion, that the tendency of cerebral development is to lessen fecundity *—the fecundity of tailors being proverbial.

Shepherd. I'm no sae sure o' that, sir ; for isna the prolificness o' parsons equally proverbial ?

Tickler. That's a poser, North.

North. Were it so, James, the fact would not present so formidable an objection as Tickler imagines ;

* *Enigmas of Life*, p. 84.

for my position is not that all clergymen or ministers are blessed with intelligent sons, but that fecundity is generally unaccompanied with great mental power. Now, of all the eminent writers we have mentioned, I do not recollect that any one of them was a member of a large family.

Shepherd. But ye surely dinna mean to say that an eminent son or daughter cannot spring frae a large family.

North. Certainly not. Quaint George Herbert, to cite an instance, was one of a family of ten, but he nevertheless became a fine poet. Still, this is an exceptional case, and exceptions cannot be legitimately urged against the theory which embraces that of Mr. Gregg, of the non-survival of the fittest.

Shepherd. You mean Mr. Darwin's theory?

North. Yes.

Shepherd. Doesna he mak oot that man and monkey are verra nearly related, thae we are prone to treat them as puir relations wham we dinna care to recognize?

North. Mr. Darwin thinks it reasonable to deduce, from the similarity of the organisms of man and other mammals, that they have originated from a common progenitor.

Shepherd. Then ane o' my forefathers wha lived, say thirty thoosand years sin', micht hae been a salamander or an ant.

Tickler. How could one of your forefathers be an aunt, James?

Shepherd. Dinna mak bad puns, Tickler, or maybe I shall believe that Darwin's theory may be correck after a'. But, Mr. North, how does he get

ower the fact of the great difference between the intellect o' man and the instinct o' brutes?

North. He denies, as does Mr. Spencer,* that there is any fundamental difference between man and the higher mammals in their mental faculties. Both are alike subject to pleasure and pain, happiness and misery; nay, further, animals are even fond of excitement, and suffer from *ennui*. "All have the same senses, intuitions, and emotions, even the more complex ones; they feel wonder and curiosity; they possess the same faculties of imitation, attention, imagination, and reason, though in very different degrees. †

Shepherd. I canna believe it. Just fancy an ourang-outang or chimpanzee revellin' in the gorgeous eemagery o' a poo'rful imagination, or receetin' a poem no unlike the *Isle of Palms*—

North. Or the *Queen's Wake*.

Shepherd. —to his fellow-monkeys wha are squatted aroun' him, listenin' wi' creetical ears to the receetation, and ready, the maement he has finished, to congratulate the owther upon his success; to admire the beauty o' his thochts, the flicht o' his imagination, the sublimity o' his eemagery, and the correctness o' his taste; or, as is mair likely, impatient to damn the production wi' faint praise.

Tickler. So that our *Noctes* may be but a poor imitation of their symposia. But pray, North, how does he meet the objections which must necessarily have been raised to a theory so boldly antagonistic to men's previous conceptions. Many objections occur

* *Principles of Psychology*, vol. i. p. 453, Second Edition.

† *Descent of Man*, vol. i. p. 48.

to my own mind at this moment. Does Mr. Darwin credit anthropomorphous apes with incipient powers of speech? Max Müller, as you are well aware, affirms that the capacity of naming a thing, or the making a thing knowable, separates man for ever from all other animals; which, though they have sensation, perception, memory, and, in a certain sense, intellect, are nevertheless devoid of reason, which alone is conversant with general ideas.*

North. Mr. Darwin holds language to be an art acquired "by imitation and modification, aided by signs and gestures, of various sounds, the voices of other animals, and man's own instinctive cries." This view is also shared by many philologists.

Shepherd. Pooh, pooh! I dinna believe 't.

Tickler. Why, then, have not birds evolved an articulate language for themselves?

North. Because, according to Mr. Darwin, their intelligence is not sufficiently developed.

Tickler. What, then, develops intelligence? If, as you say, Mr. Darwin denies that there is any fundamental difference between the mental faculties of man and the higher mammals, and if both alike possess those emotions and faculties from which, as I understand, intelligence is supposed to be evolved, how is it that in none of the multitudinous forms of life do we meet with intelligence sufficiently developed to have created an articulate language?

Shepherd. Weel done, Tickler; that soun's logical, thaigh I wasna just able to fallow you.

Tickler. And with respect to Darwin's attributing reason to animals, his theory is opposed by

* *The Science of Language*, Third Edition, p. 385.

Max Müller and other high authorities, who hold language and thought to be indivisible;* and if this is so, then no animals possessed of reason can be without a language.

North. Mr. Darwin admits that it is often difficult to distinguish between the power of reason and instinct, but he relates instances of what he thinks is clear evidence that animals possess the power of reasoning. He infers, too, from the prolonged dreams of dogs, that a succession of connected ideas may pass through the mind without the aid of any form of language.†

Tickler. Then he and Müller are at issue; for the latter, whilst admitting that "it is possible, without language, to see, to perceive, to stare at, to *dream* about things," denies the possibility of even such simple ideas as white or black being for a moment realized without words.‡

Shepherd. And hasna Wudsworth ca'd language, no the *dress*, but the *incarnation* o' thochts? and hasna De Quinshy proclaimed this to be a profoond truth, and hasna he declared language and thoct to be as inseparable as sowl and body? §

Tickler. Schlegel || has made a similar remark, James. But, North, how does Darwin account for the moral sense?

North. He holds it to be but the result of the development of the social instincts, these being "probably an extension of the parental or filial affec-

* *The Science of Language*, Second Series, p. 7.

† Vol. i., p. 58. ‡ *Science of Language*, Second Series, p. 78.

§ De Quincey's *Works*, vol. x. p. 274.

|| *Lectures on Hist. of Literature*.

tions," * as to the origin of which he thinks it hopeless to speculate.

Tickler. If the difference in mind between man and the higher animals is one of degree and not of kind, † and if the moral sense be but the instincts highly developed, then what becomes of man's claim to be not only superior to the rest of creation in mental capacity, but in moral purpose; to be alone capable of communion with God, and in whom alone is implanted an intuitional moral sense, and an anticipation of a future life?

Shepherd. Aye, sir, gin we are but animals mair highly developed than apes, hoo can we mak pretension to be the creatures made in God's own image; and what becomes o' the hopes and aspirations which we ca' religion?

North. These questions are naturally suggested by the Darwinian hypothesis, and are perhaps difficult to answer satisfactorily. Still, I think we must not confound Darwinism with materialism, nor regard it as necessarily antagonistic to religion. Mr. Darwin does not attempt to solve the problem of the origin of life, a problem which is and, as I think, must ever remain, unsolved. He does not, therefore, exclude the idea of a Creator; for although he affirms that there is no evidence that man was originally endowed with the ennobling belief in the existence of an Omnipotent God, he holds the question to be wholly distinct from that higher one, whether there exists a Creator and Ruler of the universe—a question which, as he admits, has been answered in the affirmative by the highest intellects that have ever lived. ‡

* Vol. i. p. 80.

† Vol. i. p. 105.

‡ Vol. i. p. 65.

Shepherd. I'm glad to hear you say so.

Tickler. But surely he "completely destroys the objective value of any idea which we can form of Him, and this practically amounts to the same thing."*

North. I think not; for I can see no greater difficulty in holding to our belief whether we are the creatures of a direct creative power, or the offspring of less intelligent animals, for we can only be such by a process of evolution which must necessarily be in harmony with the laws which God designed and put into operation.

Tickler. But what of conscience and morality? If conscience be but the social instincts highly developed, in what lies the test of morality? How came it to be right to gratify some instincts, but wrong to follow others?

Shepherd. That's a puzzler, sir, and to the pint.†

North. In considering this question, Mr. Darwin argues that a moral action is one which is in harmony with the more enduring social instincts which, being ever present and persistent whilst the others are only temporary, acquire greater power over the mind; and that man, being a reflecting animal, cannot help comparing "the weaker impressions of, for instance, past hunger, or of vengeance satisfied or danger avoided at the cost of other men, with the instinct of sympathy and goodwill to his fellows, which is still present and ever in some degree active in his mind. He will then feel in his imagination that a stronger instinct has yielded to one which now seems comparatively weak; and then that sense of dissatisfaction will inevitably

* *Edinburgh Review*, No. 273, p. 208.

† *pint* = point.

be felt with which man is endowed, like every other animal, in order that his instincts may be obeyed." When he has followed these non-social instincts at the expense of other men, and then comes to contrast their past and weaker impressions with the ever-enduring social instincts, retribution follows. He feels "dissatisfied with himself, and will resolve with more or less force to act differently for the future. This is conscience; for conscience looks backwards and judges past actions, inducing that kind of dissatisfaction which, if weak, we call regret, and if severe, remorse.*

Shepherd. Then Darwin's theory is pretty much like that enunciated by Pop in his *Essay on Man*:—

" — safety must his liberty restrain :
All join to guard what each desires to gain,
Forced into virtue thus by self-defence,
Even kings learn'd justice and benevolence ;
Self-love forsook the path it first pursued,
And found the private in the public good."

North. Bravo, Jamie !

Tickler. Horace propounded the Darwinian theory in one of his Satires.† Darwin is, I suppose, a utilitarian ?

North. He is an intuitionist in so far as he identifies the conscience with innate social instincts ; and a utilitarian in so far as he determines the morality of an action by its tendency to promote the general good.

Tickler. Then he recognizes two tests of morality ; the one internal, and the other external.

North. Not necessarily so, Tickler, for you might,

* Vol. i. p. 91.

† Book I, Sat. 3.

with equal justice, attribute a double test to the morality of Christianity. Both alike start from an innate sense—call it conscience, or instinct, or what you please—and the morality of an action depends upon its harmonizing with this intuitional principle, and not upon its prospective influence upon society. It would, of course, be absurd to suppose that the moral sense could be antagonistic to the welfare of mankind; but to argue that because the former must necessarily contribute to the latter, there are therefore two tests, is illogical.

Shepherd. The deil tak me if I dinna think ye are yoursel' a Darwinian.

North. No, James, I am not a convert to Darwin's theory, for all theories of development appear to me, as to the Duke of Argyle, to "ascribe to known causes unknown effects—unknown as regards the times in which we live, and unknown so far as has hitherto been ascertained in all the past times of which there is any record."*

Shepherd. Then his Grace clings to a pedigree nobler than the ane suggested by Darwin?

North. The Duke is an able opponent of the evolution hypothesis, which, though regarded with no little favour by some of our best scientists, cannot be considered as established. Professor Huxley, for instance, thinks Mr. Darwin has failed to prove "that a group of animals, having all the characteristics exhibited by species in Nature, has ever been originated by selection, whether artificial or natural."†

Tickler. The absence of transitional forms seems to me to be fatal to the theory.

* *Primeval Man*, p. 44.

† *Lay Sermons*, p. 323.

North. That is an obvious objection, and one to which more or less weight is attached by eminent authorities. The Duke and Mr. Mivart * regard it as of great importance; Professor Köllicker—who is cited by Professor Huxley †—appears not so to view it; Huxley ‡ himself and Sir Charles Lyell § think it unimportant; whilst Mr. Lewis holds the teachings of embryology to be far more favourable to Darwin than to his opponents. ||

Shepherd. Gin the doctors disagree among them-sel's, hadna we better leave them to fecht it out?

Tickler. But how do they meet the objection?

North. They hold that evolutionism, so far from maintaining the necessary existence of these transitional varieties, explains their absence, inasmuch as it shows that the stock whence two or more species have sprung need in no respect be intermediate between these species; and Huxley thinks that the force of this analogy, when clearly appreciated, strikes at the root of all arguments against the origin of species by selection based on the absence of transitional forms.

Tickler. But I have always understood that Darwin admitted that such transitional forms have existed.

North. So he does; indeed, his theory is based upon the assumption that “numberless intermediate varieties, linking closely together all the species of the same group, must have existed;” but he argues that “the very process of natural selection constantly

* *Genesis of Species*, ch. 6.

† *Lay Sermons*, p. 335.

‡ *Ibid.* p. 325.

§ *Antiquity of Man*, p. 439.

|| *Fortnightly Review*, vol. iii. New Series, p. 616.

tends to exterminate the parent-forms and the intermediate links. Consequently, evidence of their former existence could be found only amongst fossil remains, which are preserved," as he shows, "in an extremely imperfect and intermittent record."*

Tickler. How does he meet the objection deduced from the sterility of hybrids?

North. He has devoted an entire chapter† to this question, and it would be impossible for me to do justice to his arguments in the course of a desultory conversation. But, as you are aware, those who most value his facts and arguments are far from agreeing either absolutely to accept or reject his theory. Lewis, for instance, whilst accepting it in the main, inclines to the opinion of a multiplicity of origins, and thinks that the analogies of organisms do not imply a community of kinship, but simply a community in organic laws.‡

Tickler. Well, let Darwinism be accepted by those who are able to believe that man is but a highly developed ape; for myself, I cannot but think the difference between them is too vast to be bridged by the evolution hypothesis. As Dryden sang—

"Beasts are the subject of tyrannic sway,
Where still the stronger on the weaker prey.
Man only of a softer mould is made,
Not for his fellows' ruin, but their aid:
Created kind, beneficent, and free,
The noble image of the Deity."

North. What can have become of James?

* *Origin of Species*, Sixth Edition, p. 138. † *Ibid.*, ch. 9.

‡ *Fortnightly Review*, vol. iii. New Series, pp. 372, 616, 627. *Ibid.*, vol. iv. p. 79.

Shepherd. Ye nicht weel ask that, sir. However, I'm thankfu' Tickler has led us frae science to poetry, for I dinna care to let ye twa have a' the tauk to yoursel's, while I remain as seelent as Pylades.*

North. But before changing the subject, James, allow me to disabuse your mind of the impression that I am one of Mr. Darwin's disciples; for although I admire the vast knowledge, the philosophical spirit, the elegant diction, and the interest which is exhibited in every page of his works, I cannot accept his reasoning as conclusive. The selection theory, whilst accounting for many varieties, cannot, as it appears to me, cite a single instance in which a variety has been changed into a species by selection. I cannot accept the theory, inasmuch as it fails to show how the intellect of man has been evolved from the mental attributes of animals; because Mr. Darwin has failed to explain the co-existence of similar structures of diverse origin; because his explanation of the origin of our religious belief is utterly inadequate; because, by deducing the moral sense from the social instincts, and these from the parental and filial affections, he has proceeded upon the illogical and unscientific method of assuming a parentage which he has not even attempted to establish, and into the origin of which he admits it to be hopeless to inquire; and, finally, because his genesis of the moral sense, being based upon a supposed distinction between the social or more persistent, and the individual or less persistent, instincts, leads him to the impotent conclusion that that which must have been morally right before the persistency of certain instincts had been determined,

* In the *Libation-Pourers*.

and their effect upon the common weal of mankind ascertained, is afterwards decided to be wrong, and thus the morality of an action is made dependent upon experience.

Shepherd. For gudeness' sake, sir, dinna lead us intil a discussion about utilitarianism.

Tickler. Pardon us a moment, James. [*To NORTH.*] Mr. Darwin, I understand, disclaims antagonism to religion?

North. Most explicitly; indeed, his theory, as Mr. Hutton observes,* seems to make for the theistic argument, instead of against it. This appears to be Mr. Mivart's view also.† It is, however, too true that not a few of the leaders in the domain of science and philosophy hold opinions which it is difficult, nay, impossible, to reconcile with belief in a personal Deity. Their religion, so far as I can judge, is one which consists solely in the recognition of a creative power, as opposed to a personal God. This Agnosticism—a creed which appears to me to spring from an overweening reliance on the intellect, and a tendency to discredit anything and everything that cannot be formally demonstrated—recognizes “the domain of our knowledge as necessarily co-extensive with the horizon of our faith.”‡ The spread of this disbelief in Theism has unsettled the faith of many, who, not having the opportunity or the ability to estimate its claims, have come to regard science and religion as necessarily antagonistic. Nor is the attitude which many religionists assume towards science favourable

* *Essays*, vol. i. p. 63.

† See the chapter on “Theology and Evolution” in *The Genesis of Species*.

‡ *Philosophy of the Unconditioned*.

to religion itself. They should ever bear in mind the truth which Juvenal has expressed—

“Nunquam aliud natura, aliud sapientia dicit.”

By interfering with scientific investigation they become, as Mr. Maurice has said, enemies of liberty of conscience.* The time has surely passed when free inquiry can be fettered. Truth, as Dean Milman, in his noble Introduction to the *History of Latin Christianity*, has remarked, is the one paramount object to which all men should bend their minds, for assuredly the intellect was given to us for the very purpose of being exercised. Nor are we to limit the field of inquiry, and say, Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther. It is not, however, religionists alone who have erred in proscribing certain inquiries, for physicists have committed a similar mistake. If the one party not unfrequently denounces science because of its supposed hostility to religion, does not the other too often rail against the moral attributes and intuitions of man because they cannot be reduced to the same tests as physical phenomena? Let Science push her discoveries to the utmost limits, there will ever remain a sphere beyond the reach of its philosophy.

Shepherd. Weel, sir, though you're an auld Tory, there is a great measure o' liberalism in your natur'. But, after a', I'm no quite sure that toleration o' scepticism doesna indicate an instability o' faith.

Tickler. You agree, then, with Dr. Johnson, who said that those only who believe in revelation are angry at having their faith called in question.

* *Lectures on Conscience*, p. 120.

North. The same mistake of confounding toleration with disbelief was committed by the French when they accused L'Hôpital of atheism because he advocated toleration. The fact is, James, that true faith is ever tolerant of the doubts of others, because it is less liable to be affected by them. The pseudo-believer, on the contrary, is prone to be intolerant, for he is apt to try to get rid of the unpleasant suggestions of his own mind by silencing the doubts of others, instead of manfully striving to solve them. As Tennyson finely says—

“There lives more faith in honest doubt,
Believe me, than in half the creeds.”

I remember, too, a passage in one of Robertson's sermons, in which a similar view is expressed.*

Shepherd. It soun's strange, sir, and I willna pledge mysel' to accept it as true gin the subjeck comes up again for discussion. But is there to be no ambrosia the nicht?

North. Ah, James! you confirm the truth of Valentine's soliloquy—

“How use doth breed a habit in a man!”

Shepherd. Bee-the-bee, sir, that reminds me that this is St. Valentine's Day; so ring for Awmrose, and order in the Balaam Box and whusky, for there's sure to be numbers o' valentines for Mawga.

North. As you please, James.

[Rings the bell. Enter AMBROSE.]

* “A man may be more decisively the servant of God and goodness while doubting His existence, and in the anguish of his soul crying for light, than while resting in a common creed, and coldly serving Him.”
—Second Series, p. 110.

Shepherd. Bring in the box, Awmrose, and the jug!

[*Exit* AMBROSE.

Isna he a sensible fallow—the *beau-ideal* of a land-lord? He's civil, quick, and obliging, and no gi'en to those eternal "Yes, sir," "No, sir," affected by waiters whose civility verges upon sycophancy, and whose presence leaves upon one the impression that their individuality has become lost in the routine o' their duties. But here he comes.

(*Enter* AMBROSE *with the box in both arms, and the incomparable upon it.*)

For gudeness sake, Awmrose, dinna fa' and spill the whusky, for I couldna thole the loss o' a single drap o' the nectar. [*Takes the jug.*] There! now it's safe; and as it seems ower fu', I'se just tak a sip while you open the box. Oh, sir! but it's gran'. Will ye no pree't?

North. Directly, James. There, Ambrose, that will do.

Ambrose. I fear, sir, the lock has been sprained by the pressure from within.

Shepherd. Puir things! to hae their contributions pitched pell-mell into the Balaam Box! Do you know, sir, I hae aften thocht that you should hae a motto painted on it, and I can think o' none mair suitable than—

"All hope abandon, ye who enter here."

What'n a torrent o' papers! Some o' them are big enough to contain feelosophical discussions, while ithers are elegant little documents no unlike bits o' verses frae a lassie to her laddie. Shall I begin?

Ambrose. Pardon me, gentlemen, but was the order for nine o'clock?

North. Yes, Ambrose, and we rely upon your punctuality.

Shepherd. No a minute later, for there's nae circumstance mair aggravatin' to a well-regulated stamack than unpunctuality.

[*Exit* AMBROSE.]

North. Now, James, make your selection, and read away.

Shepherd. Here gaes, then, for the pink paper. Hurra! hurra! It's a valentine, addressit to mysel'.

North. Then read it, by all means.

SHEPHERD *reads.*

“What muse, though bath'd in classic spring,
Like thine, Meonides——”

Shepherd. Wha the deevil is he?

North. Why, Homer, to be sure.

Shepherd (reads).—

“Like thine, Meonides, is meet to sing
My Shepherd's praise,—a theme that I adore,
E'en as a Grecian loves th' Ægean shore.”

What say you to that? I ca' it a yelegant classic poem, and ane that you should put intil the magazine.

North. I have too much respect for your blushes, James. But read on.

Shepherd (reads).—

“How oft with thee I've thread Meander's maze,
Claspt to thy heart——”

North. Tut, tut, my dear Shepherd!

Shepherd. Dinna interrapp. [*Reads.*]

“Claspt to thy heart, and happy in thy praise !
 And sigh'd, in hopes that it might be
 Due to my charms, that they might conquer thee.
 Blame not my heart ! How could it view unmov'd
 Thy manly form, which all who've seen have lov'd ;
 That form where grace and beauty have combin'd,
 To render worthy of my Shepherd's mind ?”

What say you to that ?

North. Do not ask me to criticize, James, for, like the ancient Greeks, I am apt to be moved to praise more, perhaps, by the charms of the author's sex, than by the merits of her composition.

Shepherd. Puir lassie ! Aiblins she has been reading o' bonny Kilmenny, and has contracted a Platonic attachment for its brawny owther, wham she has never seen, but wha is nane the less thankfu' for her praises. Were I an auld bachelor like yoursel', Mr. North, I micht find out the authoress—wha canna be other than young and beautifu'—and lead her to the kirk before the circling o' another moon.

North. Then you would forget the ballad of “Old Robin of Portingale” ? *—

“Let never again soe old a man
 Marrye soe yonge a wife,
 As did old Robin of Portingale,
 Who may rue all the days of his life.”

Shepherd. Weel, weel, I'se no complain, gin ye remain constant to Mrs. Gentle.

North. James !

Shepherd. Hoo the blush mantles on his cheek !

* Percy's *Reliques*.

Dinna deny it, sir; for you're as attentive to the widow as were the lords of Ithica to the fair Penelope. But I'm forgettin' the valentines. This time I shallna choose one on pink paper, but select this, which has a business-like appearance about it. Tickler! Tickler!

North. Do not wake him, James, for he appears to have fallen into a profound sleep.

Shepherd. Noo, that's just strange, he to hae been sae lang seelent an' we no to hae observed it. But I wanted to read this to him, for it's addressed to "Timothy Tickler, Esquire."

North. Never mind; read it.

SHEPHERD *reads.*

Oh, Timothy! my Timothy! how happy I should be,
 If thou would'st take me for thine own, and dub me Mrs. T. !
 What blessedness would then be mine ! what bliss would fill my
 soul !
 With joy my rapturous heart would beat, as we sat cheek by
 jowl.

Ah ! say not nay, but e'en consent to make me thine own wife,
 And tint with roseate hues of love the future of my life.
 Then come what may, whate'er betide, I still will think of thee
 As my own love, my better half, my sweetest Timmy T. !

How touching is that parting scene which Homer, king of men,
 Has drawn with all that graphic art which genius lends the pen—
 That touching scene where Hector, ere he rush'd to meet his
 foes,
 Clasp'd to his heart his noble wife, and sadly—blew his nose !

Such would the parting be, mine own, between myself and thee,
 But Fortune grant we ne'er may know such sad adversity.
 For should sad Fate rob me of thee, 'twould kill me, love, out-
 right ;
 And friends would write my epitaph—" She died, and—sarv'd
 her right."

Shepherd. Oh, oh, oh ! Timothy, wake up !

North. Hush, James ! Look how he seizes the
 jug, and holds it in an attitude of painful indeci-
 sion.

Shepherd. What can he be dreaming about, I
 wunner ? Luk hoo he raises it till his lips ; and noo,
 after an uncommonly lang draucht o' the toddy, he
 withdraws it frae his lips. And see what a shade o'
 sadness steals ower his face ! He maun be ill, Mr.
 North, for sic agony and palor canna be ca'd up by a
 dream. The whusky ! the whusky ! [*Starts up and*
seizes TICKLER, who is on the point of draining the
jug.] Tickler ! Tickler ! for gudeness' sake, what is
 the meanin' o' this ? Ye are trembling a' ower as if
 ye'd the ague.

Tickler. Thanks, James—many thanks for your
 timely aid. Had you been a moment later, I should
 have been poisoned.

Shepherd. Weel, sir, gin drinking the best o'
 Glenlivet be poisoning, the operation isna an un-
 pleasant one.

North. You've been nodding, Timothy.

Tickler. I suppose I have, but I cannot have
 erred for many minutes ; and yet what events seemed
 to transpire during that brief period !

Shepherd. What events, Tickler ?

Tickler. I dreamt that I was Socrates !

Shepherd. The deil ye did ! Then ye have been wiser in your dreams than ever ye were in your wakfu' hours.

North. The dream, Tickler—the dream !

Tickler. As I said, I dreamt I was Socrates, and that I saw the Dicasts assembled to hear the charge made against me of disbelieving in the gods, and corrupting youth. Melitus was there, and I fancied I detected a gleam of anticipated success lurking in his eyes. But I met his glance with an unquivering gaze. Near me were many youths, whose looks betokened both anxiety and excitement. Their sympathy strengthened me. Anytus and Lycon were there, and in a cheerful tone I proceeded to refute their charges against me, showing how, so far from disbelieving in the gods, I claimed to have acted under a mission from the Delphian oracle, by whose commands I had exposed the vanity of the Athenians, and attempted to make them wiser by making them conscious of their ignorance.

North. Pass over the arguments, Tickler, as I suppose they are to be found in the *Apology*.

Shepherd. Weel, Mr. Tickler, and what then ?

Tickler. Then I thought myself in prison, where I was visited by Crito and other friends, who urged me to escape, and promised to furnish me with supplies. But to these entreaties I turned a deaf ear, being resolved to respect the laws I had been accused of despising. At the moment I awoke I was upon the point of draining the cup of hemlock.

North. But your demeanour was certainly not that attributed to Socrates in Plato's *Phædon*, in which he is represented as having drunk the poison

with the greatest equanimity. Had he demeaned himself as you did, Juvenal would not have spoken of him as

“—— senex vicinus Hymetto,
Qui partem acceptæ sæva inter vincla cicutæ
Accusatori nollet dare.”

Shepherd. I maun gie ye baith the credit o' selectin' verra appropriate times' for sic-like dreams. Ye wadna hae dreamt o' the hemlock, Tickler, hadna the whusky been at your elbow. However, we canna sit wi' an empty jug to remind us o' the vanity o' human wishes. Bee-the-bee, it maun be nine o'clock, so let's ring for supper.

[*NORTH rings. Enter AMBROSE and attendants with the first course.*

North. Oysters, James!

Shepherd. Hoo mony? Sax dizzen! Weel, that's enuch to gie ony reasonable man an appetet for supper.

Tickler. Six dozen for the three, James; not per man.

Shepherd. Noo, Mr. Tickler, that remark confirms my statement that ye arena a Socrates at a' times; for the Athenian had mair sense than to suppose that a brother feelosopher like Mr. North wad hae gi'en sae fuilish an order as sax dizzen oysters for three fu' grown-up men, a' in the possession o' their faculties, and wi' appetetes that arena to be trifled wi'.

North. Really, my dear Shepherd——

Shepherd. Sae no a ward, sir, for the fawseness o' Tickler's supposition is too apparent to need correction.

North. Had I known, James——

Shepherd. Na, na, my dear sir; gin ye had ordered mair, I shouldna hae been able to do justice to what is to follow. Oh! but they are gran'—young and sappy—no like some that I hae seen but never tasted, which maun be carved before they are eaten. I fear they maun be young leddies frae a boarding-school, which has been broken up a' of a sudden and unexpectedly to add to the enjoyment o' us three. Puir things! their mammies may be waiting just now, "on the beached margent o' the sea," expecting their return for the holidays. *Sic transit gloria maris.*

Tickler. You affect me, James.

Shepherd. Weel, dinna be ashamed to mingle the human wi' the bivalves' brine.

North. Would that men would oftener share the convivialities of the festive board; for their effect upon national temper, as Aristophanes has observed, is of no slight importance.

Shepherd. Wasna he a Greek satirist?

North. Yes, and one who did not hesitate to strike at the foibles and weaknesses of those in authority.

Tickler. Nor to ridicule peculiarities which ought to have been respected. Aristophanes is no favourite of mine.

Shepherd. Awmrose, replenish the board before we get intil a discussion concerning the merits o' a Greek plawwright.

[NORTH *winks to* AMBROSE, *who shortly re-appears with a fresh supply of oysters.*

Now, gentlemen, ye can debate the point to your hearts' content.

Tickler. I hold that he did more harm than good

by his comedies ; for although he satirized what was really ludicrous or contemptible in the phenomena of the day, he also, as Mr. Grote * has remarked, manufactured scornful laughter out of that which was innocent or even meritorious, as well as out of boundless private slander.

Shepherd. What say you to that, Mr. North ?

North. Tickler and I are not at issue, for I admit his charge against Aristophanes to be true, whilst he will not question the justness of the praise which I bestowed on him. The fact is, there are two lights in which all satirists may be viewed—the one favourable, the other unfavourable, to their writings. Cowper himself, one of the ablest of satirists, decries satire, whilst Boileau says of it :—

“ La satire, en leçons, en nouveautés fertile,
Sait seule assaisonner le plaisant et l'utile,
Et, d'un vers qu'elle épure aux rayons du bon sens,
Détromper les esprits des erreurs de leur temps.”

Nor can it be denied that Aristophanes, although he ridiculed Socrates and Euripides, did good service by exposing the evils arising from the war policy of Cleon and Lamachus, and the avarice and corruption then prevalent in Athens. Besides, it would be unfair to judge comedies written at the time of the Peloponnesian War by standards applicable to later works. Athenian habits, political and social, must be taken into account before a just estimate can be formed of Aristophanes. No doubt the personal satire, the keen vituperation, the scathing ridicule which he heaped upon those whose views, whether philosophical

* *History of Greece*, vol. vi. p. 35.

or political, he did not share, are altogether inimical to our present notions of the limits of literary warfare. In Athens, however, they were not so scrupulous; the sanctity of private life was scarcely recognized, and the drama was almost the only safety-valve through which escaped the discontent, the opposition, the "inflammable gas"—to use an expression of De Quincey—of those who could not address the public in the Agora.

(*Enter* AMBROSE and SIR DAVID *with boiled turkey, roast goose, and saddle of mutton.*)

Shepherd. If ye dinna mind, Awmrose, ye shall gie me a draucht o' yill?

Ambrose. With pleasure, Mr. Hogg.

Shepherd (drinks). I wunner, Mr. North, whether the Athenians, wi' a' their imagination, and skill in the fine airts, could hae produced a decoction sae exhilarating and yet sae healthfu' as *that*.

North. Perhaps Tickler will answer the question whilst I make up for lost time. A slice of the turkey, if you please, James. Thank you, Ambrose. It is as cool as if iced with snow from Mount Soracte.

Tickler. Apart from the question—what connection can possibly exist between the imagination and brewing?—your inquiry, my dear Shepherd, is not difficult to answer. The climate of Greece, unlike that of our land, did not incline its inhabitants to strong drinks. Probably *posca*—vinegar and water—was the common drink.

Shepherd. Dinna tell me that, Mr. Tickler; for thaigh I amna weel up in Grecian history or mainners, I hae at least read Pop's translation o' the *Odyssey*,

and remember that Telemachus, when addressing the Council of Ithica, says—

“ Scarce all my herds their luxury suffice ;
Scarce all my wine their midnight hours supplies.”

And in the *Æneid* there is mair than either one or twa references to wine. I can quote one passage frae Mr. Conington’s translation which will serve my purpose :—

“ Soon as the feast begins to lull,
And boards are cleared away,
They place the bowls, all brimming full
And wreathe with garlands gay.
Up to the rafters mounts the din,
And voices swell and heave within :
From the gilt roof hang cressets bright,
And flambeau-fires put out the night.
The queen gives charge : a cup is brought
With massy gold and jewels wrought,
Whence ancient Belus quaffed his wine,
And all the kings of Belus’ line.”

Vinegar, indeed ! Dinna tell me that Deedo* drank what wad hae ruined her complexion as weel’s her temper. But we hae interrupt Mr. North’s defence o’ Aristophanes. Gae on, sir, while I trouble Tickler for a slice o’ the guse.

North. Really, James, I forget—

Shepherd. Ye were speakin’ o’ an inflammable gas which didna burn i’ the Agora.

North. Ah ! I was remarking that public life in Athens exhibited itself either in the Forum or on the stage. There was no press through which the public could be addressed. This being so, it is obvious that

* Dido.

popular sentiments would find expression in the drama. Now, the Athenians, whether they were favourable to the successors of Pericles or not, relished fun, and so far from objecting to see even their leaders ridiculed, expected their tastes to be gratified at the Dionysia, and so laughed heartily at the pungent comedies of Aristophanes. Men, whatever their politics, could enjoy the treat provided for them by the comedian. And even if we admit that he at times held up to ridicule that which merited respect,* we should remember that the license he enjoyed was not greater than that extended to political demagogues.

Shepherd. It maun hae been a gran' sicht, that theatre at Athens! No shut out frae the licht o' day like our ain, but canopied by heaven. Surrounded by beautifu' temples, associated in their minds wi' a' that was noble in their history, the people o' Athens sat to listen to their drawmas. The hills o' Hymettus in the distance, and the sea before them—nae wunner that the drawma attained such excellence.

Tickler. The great danger to which satirists are exposed lies in the temptation to satirize persons as well as vices. Even Juvenal was not proof against this, for he ridiculed not only the errors but the persons of his contemporaries. Nay, like most of the ancient satirists, he at times, and especially in his earlier writings, degenerated into licentiousness, both in subject and treatment.

North. No doubt; nor shall I for one moment

* "Successit vetus his comœdia, non sine multa
Laude; sed in vitium libertas excidit et vim
Dignam lege regi."

Horace's *Ars Poetica*.

attempt to overrate satire. Horace, indeed, than whom no more polished satirist ever lived, makes his friend Trebatius advise him to cultivate heroic poetry in preference to satire, as the nobler and more honourable subject of the muse. Still, it cannot be denied that many vices and errors have been exposed, many absurd habits ridiculed, many important changes facilitated, by the pungent pen of the satirist.

Shepherd. Talkin' o' pungency, I ken naethin' mair pungent than that moostard. The deil tak it, for my mouth is almost blistered wi' the bit I put on that last mouthfu' o' guse! Quick wi' the yill, Awmrose, or I shall be a deid man. [*Takes a draught.*] Oh, sirs! but the transition frae the agony o' the condiment to the beatitude o' the liquor is just incredible. I dinna know what Dante's feelings were when he quitted purgatory for heaven, but I can weel imagine that the change was no unlike what I hae just experienced.

North. Well, James, I have for a few moments been made sensible of the truth of what Dante says in the *Paradiso*—

“Intra due cibi distanti, e moventi
D'un modo, prima si morrìa di fame,
Che liber' uomo l'un recasse a' denti.”

Tickler. So that, like the *asinus Buridani*, you may die of hunger because of your indecision.

Shepherd. You'll perhaps now be civil enough, Mr. North, to gie us a translation o' the quotation.

North. Longfellow's is the most literal, and runs thus:—

“Between two viands, equally removed
And tempting, a free man would die of hunger
Ere either he could bring unto his teeth.”

Shepherd. There isna much poetry in't.

North. No, James, Longfellow's translation sacrifices beauty to literalness, and is, consequently, not agreeable to read. His notes, however, are very interesting. But I'm still halting between the goose and the turkey. Which would you recommend?

Shepherd. No ha'in' tasted the turkey, I canna judge o't; but

“The fat stubble-goose
Swims in gravy and juice,
With the mustard and apple-sauce ready for use.”

Tickler. Do as the Demus of Aristophanes did under similar circumstances—try both.

Shepherd. Sae I will, Tickler.

North. Ambrose, bring round the turkey. How is it that goose is so often served to us?

Ambrose. You remember, sir, that it was killed by the ancient Egyptians in honour of the gods.

Shepherd. Oh, Awmrose! but that is a weel-conceived and a no badly expressit compliment. Here's to your health.

Ambrose. Thank you, Mr. Hogg.

Shepherd. I canna help thinking that a close connection exists between civilization and denner.

Tickler. A trite remark, James!

Shepherd. Weel, then, I'll make an observation that aiblins isna treete—that there isna the slightest connection between the twa. Ye needna smile, Timothy; for there's nae mair affinity between civilization and the stamack than there is between guse and apple-sass.

Tickler. Exactly.

Shepherd. That there is a connection between guse and apple-sass I shallna deny; but, then, it is merely fortuitous, and sae is that between ceevilization and denner. To pretend that they canna be separated—that, in fact, they sprang frae the same cause and cannot be disassociated—is to fa' into the error o' supposing that the animal and mental appeteetes are o' the same kind, though differin', as Mr. Darwin wad say, in degree. Noo, just consider for ae moment hoo utterly diverse the twa really are. Ceevilization is, I tak it, the state o' high culture as distinguished frae savage life. It is true that mental culture is, and must be, accompanied by refinement in mainners, but it by no means follows that the preference for any particular kind o' food or for any method of cookin' is evidence o' a state o' ceevilization. When you speak o' denner you mērely refer, I jalouse, to the character o' the food constituting the chief meal o' the day. If this be so, we hae ainly to find out what are the tastes as regards food prevalent amang ceevilized nations, in order to ascertain whether the connection, of which we are speakin', really exists; for if we can point to a single instance in which civilization and denner arena associated, then the remark which ye hae ca'd treete is as untrue as a *bonny-fidee** lee. Tak, then, our German freens as an example. You surely wadna think that a partiality for sauerkroot † and pickled herrings indicated o' itsel' a high degree o' mental culture, and yet the Germans are at least as ceevilized as oursel's, and are indeed, as I'm gi'en to understaun', even profoonder metaphysicians, thaigh I hae never heard it suggested that their peculiar

* *Bonâ-fide.*

† *Sauerkraut.*

diet is mair favourable to feelosophy than is roast beef or haggis, or what Sam Weller's host ca'd a "swarry."

Tickler. You are waxing facetious, my dear James.

Shepherd. Isna it clear, then, that ceevilization has nocht to do wi' the kind o' food for which nations contrack a likin'? If, hooever, when you speak o' denner you intend to imply no ainly the kind o' food but the social pleasures attending it among ceevilized people, then I admit that it is an *occasion* for their enjoyment, though I deny it to be a *consequence* o' ceevilization.

Tickler. Although I did not intend, when speaking of dinner, James, to refer only to the kind of food eaten at the principal daily meal, yet, as you have spoken of it in this respect, I shall try to show that even in this sense there is a close connection between dinner and civilization. Nor can I do this better than by summarizing the theory propounded by Buckle.* Shortly, then:—the food of a people determines the increase of their numbers——

Shepherd. I'm nae sae sure o' that—unless, indeed, it be in the inverse ratio o' its abundance and palatableness. in pruf o' which I micht instance the proverbially large families o' the pair.

North. Your theory, James, is that of Doubleday and Sadler, a theory opposed by the most eminent authorities who have written on the subject. When such writers as Montesquieu, Condillac, Sir James Stewart, Adam Smith, Bentham, † Malthus, Mill,

* *History of Civilization*, vol. i. ch. 2.

† "Population is in proportion to the means of subsistence and wants. Montesquieu, Condillac, Sir James Stewart. Adam Smith, the Economists, have only one opinion upon this subject."—Bentham's *Works*, vol. iii. p. 73.

Darwin, and Spencer agree, as they do, in holding that population is in proportion to the means of subsistence and wants, the question can scarcely be deemed debatable.

Shepherd. Then do you mean to deny that the pair are aften—nay, generally—blessed wi' large families?

North. The fact is undeniable, James. But they do not generally suffer from a deficiency of food; on the contrary, they live on what is, though a cheap, a very nutritious food, such as bread, milk, and vegetables. That persons who subsist on a plain, plentiful, and wholesome diet are prolific, is indisputable. Buckle himself cites, as instances of this fact, the rapid increase in the populations of Asia, Africa, Mexico, Peru, and Ireland, in each of which countries there has been an abundant and cheap national food. In rice, dates, maize, and potatoes, which are so nutritious, so reproductive, and so cheap, those countries possess articles of food that have greatly stimulated the growth of population. When, therefore, Mr. Gregg, in his thoughtful *Enigmas of Life*,* says that "scanty food and hard circumstances do not oppose, but rather encourage procreation," he, as it appears to me, is in error.

Shepherd. Weel, it's some comfort gin sae respectable an owther shares my opinion, erroneous though it may be.

North. But Mr. Gregg, strange to say, explicitly admits, in the same work, that the want of abundant food is a preventive check to fecundity.

Shepherd. Noo, that's just aggravatin'; for I can

* p. 109.

excuse a writer wha fa's into a' sorts o' errors, gin he does so without contradictin' himsel', for then he has at least the merit o' being consistent.

North. It seems pretty well established that civilization operates far more potently on the law of population than the abundance or deficiency of food. But pray, proceed, Tickler; I interrupted you in your reply to James.

Tickler. Having stated that population fluctuates with the supply of food, Buckle proceeds to say that the rate of wages is determined by the increase of population. In like manner the rate of wages determines the accumulation of wealth, without which there can be no leisure, and consequently no knowledge. The connection, therefore, between food and civilization is of a primary character.

Shepherd. Weel, then——

Tickler. Pardon me a moment. When I spoke of the connection between civilization and dinner, I used the latter expression, not in the limited sense of a meal, but as embracing and implying the intellectual converse, the refined manners, and the elegancies which appertain to a feast—such as, for instance, we have just enjoyed.

Shepherd. Ye dinna mean that it's ower the while?

Tickler. As civilization has advanced, dinner has lost its sensual character; it has, as De Quincey* has well remarked, been raised to a higher office, and has become associated “with social and humanizing feelings, with manners, with graces moral and intellectual: moral in the self-restraint; intellectual in

* *The Casuistry of Roman Meals.*

the fact, notorious to all men, that the chief arenas for the easy display of intellectual power are at our dinner-tables."

North. This was true also of the Greeks and Romans, who, as Mr. Mahaffy well observes, in his scholarly and interesting work on *Social Life in Greece*,* "always laid great stress on the habits of the table as indicative of civilization." Indeed, "the Greeks of historic times not only contrasted themselves in this respect with their semi-barbarous neighbours, but even estimated the comparative culture of the Greek cities by this sensitive social test." Is not the distinction between a meal and a dinner this : that, at the latter, social pleasure, and not gluttony, is the reigning principle? This difference is well exhibited in the characters of Count Mirabel and Lord Castlefyshe, in *Henrietta Temple*.

Tickler. The sort of food is really but of secondary importance.

Shepherd. I'm nae sae sure o' that.

North. I would, as I'm sure you would, James, have preferred to sup with Persicus at the frugal board of Juvenal, than have feasted with the debauchees and sycophants whose tables were loaded with the daintiest fare ; for whilst the latter wallowed in the grossest luxury, the former discussed the glories of Homer and the excellencies of Virgil.

Shepherd. That I wad, just as I wad rather hae dined wi' Swift and Addison, off beans and bacon, than fared sumptuously wi' Harley or St. John. But hadna Awmrose, noo that he has cleared the table,

* P. 43.

better bring in the toddy ; or are we, like Sir Rupert the Brave,* reduced to the pump and the well ?

North. Give us a song, James, and we'll then wind up with a caulker.

[*Rings for the whisky.*]

SHEPHERD *sings.*

How beautifu' the braes when the sun is shinin' bright,
 And no a single cloud is seen to saften down the light ;
 But still mair beautifu' are they when beams the smile o'
 spring,
 And nature seems to laugh wi' joy—a winsome, gladsome
 thing !

And bright the life which pleasure fills when no a single care
 Starts up across one's path to bar the sunlight streaming there ;
 But deeper still, and purer too, the joy which comes at last,
 When the cares and ills we lang hae felt have vanished wi' the
 past.

As in the seasons, sae in life, brightness and shade are blent ;
 And happy he who lovin' Him by whom the twa are sent,
 Lets no the dull cold hand o' care rob life o' a' its bliss,
 But seeks in virtue's path to find the long'd-for happiness.

Tickler. Thank you, James. Here comes Ambrose.

(*Enter AMBROSE with whisky.*)

Ambrose. You will pardon me for reminding you, gentlemen, that the new Licensing Act is in operation, and that it wants only a few minutes to eleven.

* *Ingoldsby Legends.*

Shepherd. The deil tak the new Licensing Act, gin we're to be bound to wind up our *Noctes* at eleven to the minute. Whisht! dinna ye hear a soun' i' the cupboard? It maun be Gurney, wha's impatient for the hour! There! dinna ye hear't?

[*The clock strikes eleven, and GURNEY vanishes from the cupboard.*]

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